

Health and Social care Committee
Access to medical technologies in Wales
MT ToR 12 APBI

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Committee Clerk - Health and Social Care Committee

National Assembly for Wales

Cardiff Bay

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Dear *Llinos,*

Re. Access to Medical Technologies in Wales

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the scope of your proposed inquiry into access to medical technologies in Wales.

You have clearly stated that you propose to consider the uptake of medical technologies in Wales and the possible barriers to effective new treatments being more accessible to patients.

You are clear that you will not be considering access to medicines within your remit. We appreciate your intention in doing so is to limit the scope of and focus the inquiry. However, it is also important to note that many of the new technologies that are now coming to market or will be available in the coming years are “companion” products to new medicines.

Stratified Medicines

Stratified medicines (also sometimes known as “personalised medicines”) enable the pharmaceutical industry to target treatments specifically to the patient sub-populations who are more likely to respond. This is not about creating medicines unique to a patient. Rather, this is about the ability to classify individuals into sub-populations, who differ in their susceptibility to a particular disease or their response to a specific treatment. Preventive or therapeutic interventions can then be concentrated on those who will benefit, sparing expense and side effects for those who will not. Critically, this also involves the development and use of companion diagnostics to achieve the best outcomes in the management of a patient’s disease.

We believe that the development and implementation of an integrated stakeholder approach to stratified medicine will bring benefits to patients. It will benefit also prescribers, payers, and regulators and will improve the efficiency and productivity of developing new treatments, and enhance UK competitiveness and attractiveness for drug and diagnostic research and development (R&D).



The ABPI has therefore been intensively engaged on the development of such an integrated approach to stratified medicine over an extended period, working closely with a range of partners such as:

- The diagnostics sector
- Research funders
- Regulators
- Healthcare providers and policymakers
- Health informatics programmes
- Health economists

When appropriate, we will be pleased to share learns' gained from this engagement.

Appraisal Processes

In your letter, you also mention that you would welcome comments on the current appraisal processes for innovative medical technologies and the decision-making process in NHS Wales on funding new medical technologies and treatments.

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) has a Medical Technologies Evaluation Programme, which was established in 2009. The focus of their area of work is specifically the evaluation of innovative medical technologies, including devices and diagnostics. Products evaluated include:

- Medical devices that deliver treatment, such as those implanted during surgical procedures,
- Technologies that give greater independence to patients, and
- Diagnostic devices or tests used to detect or monitor medical conditions

The independent Medical Technology Advisory Committee at NICE has two core remits:

- Selecting medical technologies for evaluation by NICE guidance programmes, and
- Developing medical technologies guidance

The guidance produced currently only applies to England and is not mandatory. However, the Welsh Government is currently in the process of finalising their contractual arrangements with NICE and the Committee may wish to consider whether there should be an encouragement to include this additional work programme, so that this guidance also applies to Wales.

It may also be useful for the Committee to consider speaking with CEDAR, an NHS evaluation centre and part of the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, who have been commissioned to provide external assessments for NICE in this area.



I hope that this response is helpful to you in mapping out the boundaries of the inquiry. Obviously, we will look forward to providing evidence to your full inquiry, once the scope has been established.

Best Regards

Dr Rick Greville

Director – ABPI Cymru Wales