

National horizon scanning: supporting market access for innovative medicines



TYPE	Fully implemented	LAST UPDATE	June 2021	ENGLAND • NATIONAL
STATUS	Ongoing program since April 2017			Treatment & diagnostic – Horizon scanning

PROBLEM & OBJECTIVE

To identify and monitor emerging healthcare technologies, both cancer and non-cancer to enable early awareness and support timely market access to our NHS.

KEY COMPONENTS / STEPS

- Using horizon scanning methods and text mining techniques, our experienced horizon scanning and evidence synthesis team of 15 FTE, identify and monitor 5000+ new or repurposed therapies, cancer and non-cancer innovations as they progress towards licensing.
- We alert our HTA body, NICE (National Institute for Care and Health Excellence) within 3 years of estimated license date to allow for an initial assessment to be made.
- For those meeting the NICE remit a more detailed evidence briefing is produced, including a mix of publicly available and confidential information. Confidential information is obtained directly from the 1500+ pharmaceutical companies that we routinely engage with as part of this process.

KEY CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

- NIHR Innovation Observatory is the largest horizon scanning centre in the UK (potentially globally). Funded by the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) via the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) in England, we are an independent research centre located at Newcastle University. Our staff are experienced evidence synthesis and information specialist analysts and text mining experts. Our main stakeholders include policymakers and decision makers including, NICE, NHS England, NHS Innovation, Department of Health and Social Care and National Institute for Health Research (NIHR).

MAIN IMPACTS / ADDED VALUE

- We act as the gateway for companies to access the HTA process within NICE, ensuring timely access to new medicines across the NHS. By closely monitoring timelines and marketing authorisation plans we can ensure that NICE has adequate time to produce recommendations as close to launch in the UK as possible. Our process of alerting and notification feed directly into the Cancer Drugs Fund (CDF) an additional source of national funding for some cancer drugs in England. Early notification of new therapies to the CDF helps in their aim of providing patients with faster access to the most promising new cancer treatments while ensuring value for money within the NHS.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Since April 2017 we have successfully tracked and notified NICE of 335 new cancer and 547 non-cancer technologies involving new or repurposed therapies.
- We have produced detailed technology briefing reports for 463 of these technologies, which have initiated full technology appraisals within NICE.
- Without a structured database, systematic identification and the use of automated tools the task of monitoring and notifying in a timely manner the rapidly expanding number of innovations would not be achievable.

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REFERENCES & DOCUMENTATION

- <http://www.io.nihr.ac.uk/>

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