



Technoleg Iechyd Cymru  
Health Technology Wales

## HTW Evidence Appraisal Report – Guidance on HTW Expert Review

Further information can be found on our website  
<http://www.healthtechnology.wales/about/>

### About HTW

Health Technology Wales (HTW) is a government funded, but independent, health technology assessment organisation. We assess non-medicine health and social care technologies and models of care and support and issue independent, authoritative guidance based on evidence and expertise to health and care providers in Wales. Our work informs commissioning by NHS Wales and within social care services and supports decision makers to make evidence-informed decisions.

Anyone can suggest a topic for appraisal.

### Our Appraisal Process

For every appraisal, our researchers produce an Evidence Appraisal Report (EAR). The EAR aims to summarise the best available evidence on the effectiveness and cost effectiveness of a topic. The report also includes other aspects associated with its possible implementation, such as logistical considerations or organisational issues, and perspectives of patients, people who use social care and support and the public when relevant.

Our appraisal approach is based on a rapid review model. This means that we follow a more streamlined and accelerated approach to searching for and summarising evidence than that used by a full systematic review. As with other types of evidence review, we select evidence for inclusion based on a pre-defined protocol that is agreed upon by our Assessment Group. Our aim is to focus on the evidence that is considered most important and relevant for decision making in Wales. This may mean that there is a focus on secondary evidence and/or studies that are more recent, of higher quality, or more generalisable to the Welsh setting. It also means we may not cover all possible outcomes, but focus on those deemed most important and relevant to decision making.

### Expert Review

As part of our appraisal process, we invite experts in the field of a particular topic to take part in an expert review of this work. This involves a critical reading of a draft of our Evidence Appraisal Report (EAR) on this topic. We ask reviewers to critically read this document and provide comment, either on specific issues/uncertainties that our research team need help clarifying, or the general content of the report and its robustness – we provide a response document with some key questions to assist with this.

Please note that at the point of expert review, our EAR will be in early draft form. We often use expert review to address various gaps in our understanding of the topic and the evidence, and the overall conclusions will not be finalised and may change.

## **Eligibility to participate**

To participate in HTW expert review, you should:

- have knowledge or experience of the condition, and/or the technology being evaluated.
- agree to declare any interests you have in writing and at committee meetings, if attending (see below).
- agree to be bound by the terms and conditions of HTW's confidentiality agreement.
- agree to your name and affiliation appearing in the review documents.

In addition, if you are a health and/or social care expert, you should:

- be in active clinical practice and/or have expertise in the subject area of the evaluation
- not be under investigation by the regulator of your profession or any other professional body, have any interim restrictions placed on your practice, or have been removed from the medical or other professional register.
- not be under investigation for professional misconduct or have been found to be in breach of appropriate professional standards by the relevant professional body.

You can still participate in the HTW expert review if you have acted as a clinical expert for the manufacturer, so long as this is declared in the DoI form, and any meetings attended. If you hold official office (i.e. paid employment, unpaid directorship or membership of a standing advisory committee) with the company or any relevant comparator technology companies you can still participate, but as an industry expert.

## **Confidentiality and Declarations of Interest**

All participants in HTW expert review will be required to complete a Declaration of Interest (DoI) and Confidentiality form for each topic they review. This is required before the draft report is made available for review.

The draft report is only to be seen by those who have completed this paper work, and expert reviewers should not share the contents with any other parties, even after publication of the guidance outcome (the final EAR will be published on the HTW website at this time). If there is someone who you think should be asked to review the draft EAR, please contact us and we will approach them with an invitation and the DoI paperwork.

## **Response to comments**

Contributions from expert reviewers will be considered by the HTW Assessment Group and the HTW Appraisal Panel. Expert reviewers will have no role in authorship or editorial control of the Evidence Appraisal Report, and HTW reserves the right to make significant changes to the final publication following consideration of comments received. The views expressed in the final publication will be those of HTW.

Please note that the comments received will be made publicly available through the HTW website, with responses to each comment noted. Expert reviewers will be named in an acknowledgements section, but specific comments will not be attributed to individuals.