



Welcome to the second issue of the UK EUnetHTA newsletter, which provides you with an update of the work of those involved with EUnetHTA. This issue focuses on progress in developing the HTA adaptation toolkit and glossary and the work of three of the EUnetHTA partners that are based in the UK. For further information, contact Eleanor Bell, EUnetHTA Project Manager, NCCHTA, email: e.bell@southampton.ac.uk tel: 023 8059 5623 or www.hta.ac.uk/eunethta

EUnetHTA: project to collaboration

By Karen Facey, Evidence Based Health Policy Consultant, Scotland

EUnetHTA aims to establish an effective and sustainable European network for HTA. The three-year project is supported by the European Commission, with expert HTA input from Member States across Europe. It involves eight work packages, ranging from monitoring emerging technologies, creation of core HTA information, adaptation of national HTA reports and supporting new HTA agencies.

It is hoped that the good work emerging from the EUnetHTA project will be developed from 2009 onwards to create a permanent collaboration for HTA across Europe. The aim of the EUnetHTA Collaboration will be to create a sustainable network that facilitates high quality HTA work and provides a focal point for access to HTA knowledge in Europe.

The EUnetHTA Secretariat has developed a proposal document describing how the EUnetHTA Collaboration will work: its structure, functions, and unique added value



compared with other international HTA organisations. During 2007 the proposal document was issued for consultation to all EUnetHTA partners and the public. Responses showed real enthusiasm for the development of EUnetHTA tools, which help make HTA processes more efficient so that input to national policy-making can be more timely. The 'spectrum of collaboration' (see diagram above) will be extended by creation of a permanent collaborative network. It will allow 'joint actions' that facilitate sharing of work among members

in a harmonised manner using common standards and tools. In public consultation, this had led to fears that a centralised decision-making body would be created. But this is certainly not the intention. HTAs are always intended to inform national or regional health policy. However, it is hoped that joint actions, such as collaboration on registries for emerging technologies, could add real value.

To see how the EUnetHTA Collaboration proposal develops during 2008, visit the EUnetHTA website www.eunethta.net

Toolkit and Glossary *By Debbie Chase, Senior Research Fellow, NCCHTA*

The HTA adaptation toolkit and accompanying glossary are currently undergoing a second round of quality assurance testing. EUnetHTA partners are using these resources to adapt HTA reports written in other countries for their own setting. Evaluation was very positive and, although not a requirement of this exercise, several of the resulting adapted reports were used for policy-making purposes.

Work Package 5 partners are now looking at further toolkit improvements, including the need for an interactive version, guidance on adapting cost-effectiveness models, usefulness in adapting diagnostic tests and screening reports, and providing more information on how to assess data on organisational aspects.

The current versions of the adaptation toolkit and glossary are

available to download from the HTA programme website www.hta.ac.uk/eunethta. If you have the opportunity to use the toolkit, we would value your feedback, please send any comments to Eleanor Bell, EUnetHTA Project Manager.



Involvement in EUnetHTA by UK-based partners

The National Horizon Scanning Centre

by Sue Simpson, the National Horizon Scanning Centre, Birmingham

The National Horizon Scanning Centre at the University of Birmingham, in collaboration with EuroScan, the International Information Network on New and Emerging Health Technologies, has led the development of a newsletter for EUnetHTA's Work Package 7 (WP7).

The newsletter aims to provide information about high volume, costly and rapidly developing new and emerging health technologies that are at an early stage of development, and which may have a significant impact on healthcare in the EU. The information provided is intended to help decision-makers better anticipate, plan and manage the introduction and diffusion of new health technologies.

To be objective and transparent about the contents of the newsletter

a method for prioritising health technologies was imperative. EuroScan has a database of new and emerging technologies that is populated by member agencies from both EU and non-EU countries. This database was used to select an initial 'long-list' of new and emerging health technologies, added to the database in the previous six months, for potential inclusion in the newsletter.

A prioritisation panel of EuroScan members and representatives from WP7 were then asked to independently consider these against significance criteria to determine the potential impact and rank of each technology. Those identified as having the most impact were presented to an editorial board for consideration for inclusion in the newsletter.

This EUnetHTA project received funding for three years from 2006-8. The first year involved the design of the newsletter, creation of the mechanism for deciding the contents and establishing the prioritisation panel and editorial boards. A pilot of the newsletter was produced and evaluated in the second year of the project. The first official issue of the newsletter has published visit www.eunetha.eu/Communication/Newsletter_WP7_2008/



The Cochrane Collaboration and the UK Cochrane Centre

by Mike Clarke, UK Cochrane Centre, Oxford



The Cochrane Collaboration is the world's largest organisation dedicated to the preparation and maintenance of systematic reviews in health care (www.cochrane.org). It was established 15 years ago and focuses on the effects of interventions. This year the Collaboration will release its first systematic reviews of diagnostic test accuracy.

Currently there are over 3,400 full Cochrane reviews, with published protocols for a further 1,800, and hundreds more at earlier stages of development. These reviews are all published in The Cochrane Library, www.thecochranelibrary.com, and are available free to everyone in the UK and Ireland. An online petition has been set up calling on the European Commission to fund similar access for EU members, and EUnetHTA can take credit for bringing together many of the people responsible for this. You can sign the petition at www.cochrane.epetitions.net

Cochrane Centres in Europe are involved in various EUnetHTA work packages, coordinated through The Cochrane Collaboration based in

Oxford, England. The UK Cochrane Centre has focused on Work Package 5 (HTA Adaptation Toolkit). In order to develop the effectiveness part of the toolkit, Mike Clarke, Director of UK Cochrane Centre, drew on the Centre's work in building the Cochrane Methodology Register, principally that of Anne Eisinga and Sally Hopewell, to review quality assessment tools for systematic reviews. This has led to modifications of the Oxman Guyatt checklist, producing a series of questions which will help those involved in EUnetHTA to determine quickly whether the findings of an HTA report could be transferred to another context, and what steps are needed to make it transferable.