

Editorial

HEALTH TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT: THE RESEARCHER'S POINT OF VIEW

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The development of the pharmaceutical and medical-hospital equipment industries in the world market, and the disparities in the different contexts and scenarios of health services that need these technologies, the increase in demand and the pressure for incorporation, together with the inefficient management of scarce and finite financial resources, especially in developing countries, are one of the main reasons for the development of Health Technology Assessment (HTA) studies.

The efficient allocation of available resources and health technologies in the various contexts of care determines, in a way, the quality and results achieved over time. Therefore, the incorporation of health technologies should be done based on the full knowledge of public policies and the best available scientific evidence.

Faced with this reality, the critical evaluation of the technology to be incorporated or abandoned, based on scientific evidence, economic and technical operational issues become indispensable for maximizing available resources, health benefits and ensuring the population's access to effective and safe technologies, in conditions of equity, ensuring efficiency and sustainability in the decision-making process.

Brazil is a good example of how HTA can help ensure the efficiency and sustainability of the health system. We are the only country in the world with over 100 million inhabitants whose health system is universal. In fact, today we are over 211 million. Health Technology Assessment can be very useful, therefore, as a path to equitable and universal care in our health system, known as SUS - Single Health System.

Health Technology Assessment is a process in which different research designs are employed to investigate the clinical, economic, environmental, social, political and legal consequences for society and the institution of the use of technologies in health.

ATS considers the safety, effectiveness, usability, availability, ownership and costs of new technologies, providing decision makers with an impersonal analysis based on the best available scientific evidence on the applicability and use of health technologies in clinical practice, enabling a better understanding of their implications for the service.

Health technologies can be understood as drugs, technical equipment and procedures,

organizational, educational, information and support systems, and the assistance programs and protocols through which health care is provided to the population. Therefore, it is clear how broad the scope of HTA and health technologies is.

Health technologies, together with service providers, form the Economic and Industrial Health Complex (CEIS), a term coined to describe the complex relationships between productive, technological and social interests in health. It is impossible to think about HTA studies without considering in the analysis and discussions, the strategic character of this Complex, both to minimize the vulnerability of the health policy in countries with universal systems such as Brazil, and to sustainably promote national development.

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