COST-EFFECTIVENESS THRESHOLD FRAMEWORK

WHY WAS THIS WORK DONE?

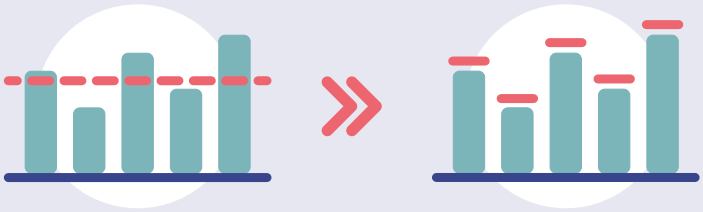
Health systems have **limited budgets** and **cannot fund** every new medicine or health technology.

WHAT IS A COST-EFFECTIVENESS THRESHOLD?

A cost-effectiveness threshold (CET) is a tool used by health technology assessment (HTA) agencies to judge whether a treatment provides sufficient value for money.

"How much should society be willing to pay for an improvement in health?"

WHAT IS THE PROPOSED COST-EFFECTIVENESS THRESHOLD FRAMEWORK?



Current Situation

Traditionally, many countries use **a single threshold for all treatments**. A single threshold may not reflect societal values fairly.

ASCERTAIN Solution

We propose a **more flexible threshold framework**, where the **acceptable level of spending can vary** depending on factors.

Decision-makers would consider:

- How severe is the condition?
- Are there equity or fairness considerations?
- How great is the unmet need? Are there effective alternatives available?
- How important are the expected benefits to patients and society?

WHAT COULD THE CET FRAMEWORK ENSURE?

1. Health decisions would **reflect more than cost alone**
2. **Different diseases** could be entitled to **different levels of investment**
3. **Patient and societal preferences** would be **included**
4. **Greater transparency** and **improved trust** are achieved

KEY TAKEAWAY

Healthcare funding decisions should reflect not only **efficiency and cost** but also **fairness**, **disease severity**, **unmet need**, and the **values of patients and society**.

Visit access2meds.eu to find resources, insights and updates tailored to help you understand how ASCERTAIN is working to make life-saving treatments more accessible for everyone. To find more about the policy tool please visit: toolbox.access2meds.eu

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COST-EFFECTIVENESS THRESHOLD FRAMEWORK

WHY WAS THIS WORK DONE?

Health systems have limited budgets and cannot fund every new medicine or health technology. Decisions are often based on whether a treatment provides enough health benefit compared with its cost. This is sometimes called "cost-effectiveness."

The ASCERTAIN project explores better ways of making these decisions, particularly for new therapies where traditional approaches may not fully capture what patients and society value.

WHAT IS A COST-EFFECTIVENESS THRESHOLD?

A cost-effectiveness threshold (CET) is a tool used by health technology assessment (HTA) agencies to judge whether a treatment provides sufficient value for money.

In simple terms, it helps answer the question:

"How much should society be willing to pay for an improvement in health?"

Traditionally, many countries use a single threshold for all treatments.

WHAT IS THE PROPOSED COST-EFFECTIVENESS THRESHOLD FRAMEWORK?

A single threshold may not reflect societal values fairly.

For example, society may be willing to pay more for:

- Treatments for severe illnesses
- Therapies for patients with no alternative options
- Innovations that address important unmet needs

ASCERTAIN proposes a **more flexible threshold framework**, where the acceptable level of spending can vary depending on characteristics of the disease, patient population, and societal priorities.

Rather than asking only:

"Is this treatment cost-effective?"

Decision-makers would also consider:

- How severe is the condition?
- How great is the unmet need?
- Are there effective alternatives available?
- How important are the expected benefits to patients and society?

- Are there equity or fairness considerations?

FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF PATIENTS THIS CET FRAMEWORK COULD ENSURE THAT:

1. Health decisions would reflect more than cost alone

Reimbursement decisions should not rely only on a simple calculation of costs and health gains. The framework recognizes that some treatments may deserve special consideration even if they appear expensive.

2. Different diseases could be entitled to different levels of investment

Society may be willing to spend more on treatments for conditions that:

- Are life-threatening
- Cause substantial disability
- Affect people with very limited alternatives
- Address high unmet medical needs

This approach can help ensure that people with rare, severe, or complex conditions are not disadvantaged by a "one-size-fits-all" decision process.

3. Patient and societal preferences would be included

This means patients should not only be consulted about their experience of living with a condition, but also contribute to discussions about what constitutes fair healthcare spending.

4. Greater transparency and improved trust are achieved

The proposed CET approach aims to make reimbursement decisions more explicit and understandable.

For patients, greater transparency can:

- Make decisions easier to understand
- Clarify why some medicines are funded and others are not
- Improve confidence in healthcare decision-making
- Support meaningful patient involvement

KEY TAKEAWAY

The central message of the ASCERTAIN CET framework is that healthcare funding decisions should reflect not only efficiency and cost but also fairness, disease severity, unmet need, and the values of patients and society. The proposed flexible cost-effectiveness threshold framework seeks to make reimbursement decisions more patient-centred and better aligned with what people consider important when allocating healthcare resources.

For more information on ASCERTAIN please visit: https://www.access2meds.eu/