

Health Technology Assessment

Prioritization criteria

The Health Technology Assessment (HTA) program prioritizes technology topics based on the legislative requirements and criteria that are widely used in technology assessment program settings.

Primary criteria: The primary criteria are directly linked to the legislative mandates for the program ([RCW 70.14.100](#)), which focus on technology reviews where there are concerns about safety, efficacy, or cost effectiveness, especially relative to existing alternatives.

- **Potential patient harm / safety concerns.** The safety criterion is directed at identifying the potential degree of harm than an individual may experience if the technology is used.
- **Concerns about therapeutic efficacy or diagnostic accuracy and appropriateness of outcomes for patients.** The efficacy criterion is directed at identifying whether there are issues related to the potential clinical impact that the technology, if used, can have for the individual with the condition indicated. Efficacy concerns cover several categories: the range of potential benefit that could be realized; whether alternatives exist; and the extent of questions related to whether the potential benefit is shown in actual results.
- **Estimated total direct cost per year (estimated increase / decrease).** The cost criterion is directed at identifying the potential budget impact (degree of change) that the technology coverage or non-coverage would have for the participating agencies.

Secondary Criteria: There are other factors to consider when deciding which technology should go through the extensive review process. The criteria align with HTA program goals and legislative mandates, and are widely used by other entities that conduct health technology assessments.

- **Number of persons affected per year.** The number of patient's criterion is directed at identifying the potential number of individuals that may use the technology.
- **Severity of condition treated by technology.** The severity of condition criterion is directed at identifying the significance of the individual burden of morbidity, mortality, or disability that the condition creates. This is a judgment based on experience and clinical expertise.
- **Policy related urgency / diffusion concern.** The urgency criterion is directed at identifying policy relevant factors that impact the timing of the technology review.
- **Potential or observed variation.** The variation criterion is directed at identifying variation in the access, payment, provision, or use of a health technology. There are a number of aspects of health care utilization that may be variable and indicate the potential for improved quality through research and policy applications.
- **Special populations / ethical concerns.** The special populations or ethical concerns criterion is directed at identifying any significant issue that the technology may impact with respect to ethical, legal, or social implications or a specific impact to a special population such as women, children, elderly, or a specific race or ethnicity.