A Guide for Public Partners
Acknowledgements

Thank you to Karen Facey, Stella Macpherson, and members of the Health Technology Assessment International Special Interest Group - patient involvement group for their input into previous versions of this guide. Thank you to former SHTG public partners: Daniel McQueen, Tracy Sheppard, Jim Findlay, and John Woods for their input into the development of this guide.
What is this guide about?

This guide is to help you to be a public partner with the Scottish Health Technologies Group (SHTG). It will:

- Help you to understand the role of a SHTG public partner.
- Help you to get the most out of being a SHTG public partner.
- Help you to contribute the most you can to the SHTG.
- Give some practical tips on how things work at the SHTG.
- Give you some basic tips about what health technology assessment is.
What is the Scottish Health Technologies Group?

The Scottish Health Technologies Group (SHTG) is a national health technology assessment (HTA) agency. It provides evidence support and advice to NHSScotland on the use of new and existing health technologies which are not medicines and which are likely to have significant implications for people's care in Scotland.

What is a health technology?

A health technology is any type of intervention that tries to improve people's health. This might be a medicine like an antibiotic, a device like a thermometer, or a clinical procedure like a hip replacement.

Health technologies also include any given approach to healthcare, for example having a treatment at home instead of in an outpatient department.
What type of question does the SHTG consider?

The SHTG considers research evidence and clinical/patient opinion (where available) to reach a conclusion about scenarios like this:

A type of wound dressing is being used in Fife but not in Greater Glasgow and Clyde. The SHTG may investigate whether the dressings use should be rolled out across Scotland, or if it should stop being used in Fife.

Imagine that a new form of knee replacement has been developed. The SHTG may assess whether this is better than existing options.

The SHTG Committee has around 25 members and meets four times a year. The group has a range of interests, experience and expertise. Some members represent professional networks and all territorial NHS boards are invited to participate. Members include representatives of National Procurement, NHS board chief executives, directors of finance and planning, industry representatives, and health economists. Clinical groups such as directors of medicine and public health are also represented. There are currently four public partners who are full members of the SHTG.
Full membership is available on the Healthcare Improvement Scotland website here:

http://www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/our_work/technologies_and_medicines/shtg/idoc.ashx?docid=f7497691-19c7-4c78-8f34-cb5e0b1a1fa8&version=-1

A main responsibility of the SHTG Committee is the issuing of advice statements (as described on page 15) on health technologies and the Committee is supported in this work by the SHTG staff team. The full range of responsibilities of the committee is available here: http://www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/our_work/technologies_and_medicines/shtg/idoc.ashx?docid=3951930d-0ca5-4ba7-8c77-9d1bd9ff95bc&version=-1

This gives information on the process of the group, how often the Committee meets and what will be discussed at different stages. If you want a paper copy just let us know and we will send one to you.

What is the Evidence Review Committee?

The Evidence Review Committee (ERC) is a sub-group within SHTG which selects which new topics that have been referred will be taken forward for assessment. It also prepares draft advice based upon reviews of evidence for the SHTG Committee and helps to guide the evidence review process. It has around 11 members and meets monthly.
What is your role with the Scottish Health Technologies Group?

Understanding the experiences of the public, patients, their families and carers is very important in the work of Healthcare Improvement Scotland. You help us to make sure that the public’s voice is heard, and that the advice that we give is clear. We really value your input and the time and effort you are putting in.

You are an equal member of the SHTG Committee. This means your say and vote counts in the same way as all the other group members. You can access the same training and development opportunities as the other members. We do not expect you to speak for the whole public or to represent a specific patient group. You bring your views and knowledge as an individual and a member of the public to the SHTG.

Why is the Public Partner role important?

It is very important that Health Technology Assessments (HTAs) take account of the real impact of a health technology on the daily lives of patients, their caregivers and the public.
You can help to make sure that we are considering these important issues, for example:

- Have we picked up on all the things that may be important to patients, carers and the public?
- Have we made enough effort, for example by talking and engaging with patient organisations, to gather patients' views?
- Have we considered what it is like for patients to live with this illness (physically, mentally, socially and financially)?
- Have we considered the impact of the illness on society and the public?
- Have we considered the potential harms and side effects of the health technology?
- Have we considered all the potential benefits of the health technology on length and quality of life?
- Have we used the plainest language that we can in our reports?

It is important that your voice is heard, as a person bringing a public perspective to the SHTG. We will talk to patient organisations, and also look at research evidence that has gathered patient views, when possible.

You can help us to fully consider the information we get on patients experiences and make sure that it is heard in our advice.
What support will I get?

We are here to offer you whatever support you need. Please get in touch and ask us about anything that is on your mind.

Support that is in place includes:

• Advice from the public involvement advisor on questions you may have on any aspect of SHTG.
• A named SHTG secretariat member to contact with any practical questions, such as how you reclaim your travel expenses.
• The option to access training in health technology assessment and other areas that you are interested in.
• You will have a regular review meeting, with the public involvement unit, to discuss how things are going and your personal development.
What will I be asked to do?

You will be asked to attend the meetings of the SHTG. These meetings take place four times a year in Glasgow. The dates are set and will be shared with you well in advance of the meetings.

You will also be asked to take part in some ERC meetings; attendance at these meetings will be shared amongst the SHTG Public Partners. ERC meetings take place in the morning once a month, in Glasgow. You can join meetings by telephone rather than in person, but when possible it would be helpful to attend the full SHTG meetings in person.

The meetings have a large number of papers and a significant amount of preparation time is required to read over them. Papers will be sent to you around one week before a meeting and hard copies can be provided on request. Remember that you can contact the public involvement advisor before a meeting, so that arrangements can be made for you to ask any questions you have to SHTG staff members.

Another key role for public partners is to provide comments on our plain language summaries.

There is a full job description of the public partner role with SHTG which will be sent to you before you start but please ask us if you would like a hard copy.
Contacts

James Stewart
Public Involvement Advisor
Healthcare Improvement Scotland
50 West Nile Street
Glasgow
G1 2NP

Email: james.stewart4@nhs.net
Telephone: 0141 227 3257

If the public involvement advisor is unavailable, please email the SHTG mailbox at shtg.hcis@nhs.net
What does the Scottish Health Technology Group produce?

What is a health technology assessment?

It is a recognised review process that brings together evidence from different areas to provide advice to healthcare decision makers. The type of advice given can cover a number of areas for example:

- Should NHSScotland start using a new health technology?
- Should NHSScotland stop using a particular health technology?
- How should NHSScotland use a particular health technology?
- In what patient groups should a health technology be used?
- Should more research be carried out on this health technology?

Top tip – you will often see Health Technology Assessment abbreviated as HTA.
When we carry out a HTA we look at whether a technology works, is safe and offers value for money. We may also gather patient views and consider any social or ethical factors associated with a health technology. We also look at how care is currently delivered in Scotland and how this health technology would fit in with current practice in the NHS in Scotland.

The technical term to describe how well a health technology works is clinical effectiveness. The technical term to describe whether a health technology is good value for money is cost effectiveness.
Summary of products

SHTG offers stakeholders a range of products, each of which can be tailored according to the needs of the requester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Timescale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SHTG Advice</td>
<td>SHTG Advice is intended to guide practice across Scotland, following consideration and recommendations by the SHTG Committee.</td>
<td>SHTG Advice is based upon an evidence review that includes numerous elements of a traditional HTA; for example, clinical effectiveness, safety, cost-effectiveness, and other optional domains such as patient and public views, clinical expert opinion, and ethical and social implications of the technology under review. The evidence underpinning SHTG Advice will likely involve a review of existing literature, with additional analyses undertaken to help inform the creation of advice. SHTG Advice is subject to peer review and consultation. SHTG Advice is provided alongside a plain language summary.</td>
<td>Typically completed in approximately 6 months from acceptance onto the SHTG work programme.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Product</td>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Timescale</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evidence Synthesis</td>
<td>SHTG Evidence Syntheses inform policy and practice across Scotland, by providing bespoke review and / or analytic support for time-sensitive decision making.</td>
<td>Evidence Syntheses are customised health technology reviews that contain one or more elements of a traditional Health Technology Assessment (HTA). Evidence Syntheses may include a review of the existing evidence on health technologies, or may involve primary analyses in order to answer the question posed by the referrer; for example, economic analysis, budget impact assessment, qualitative synthesis of patient/public and clinical views. Evidence Syntheses are based on the best evidence that could be identified retrieved or undertaken within the time available – as agreed with the topic referrer. The reports are subject to external peer review.</td>
<td>Typically completed within 3-6 months of agreement on the project scope/plan with the topic referrer.</td>
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# Menu of products

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>SHTG Advice</th>
<th>Evidence Synthesis</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time taken to complete product (after acceptance onto work programme)</td>
<td>Approx. 6 months</td>
<td>3-6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Output</td>
<td>Recommendations/Advice</td>
<td>Bespoke evidence support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>‘Required to consider’ by NHS Scotland</td>
<td>For information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploratory literature review</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive literature review, which could include:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– clinical effectiveness</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>O Optional</td>
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<tr>
<td>– cost effectiveness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>– safety</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– patient and social aspects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget impact analysis</td>
<td>O Optional</td>
<td>O Optional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic modelling</td>
<td>O Optional</td>
<td>O Optional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patient/public involvement, which could include:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– public partner review</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>O Optional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– patient group input</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advice/Recommendations</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plain language summary</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer review</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical expert input</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>O Optional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>SHTG Committee</td>
<td>Healthcare Improvement Scotland</td>
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Useful resources

Health Technology Assessment International (HTAi) subgroup on Patient and Citizen Involvement in HTA: offer a set of resources for patients and the public:
www.htai.org/index.php?id=546

Including this webinar introducing patients to concepts of HTA:
www.htai.org/webinars/pcisg-intro-hta/


European Patients’ Academy (EUPATI) - written information and videos on HTA and research methodology:
www.eupati.eu

Bandolier what is series - Internet essays on health concepts
www.medicine.ox.ac.uk/bandolier/extra.html
Online courses and collections of videos on understanding evidence, critical appraisal, statistics and health technology assessment

Futurelearn online courses – HTA & informed health consumer:

www.futurelearn.com/courses/hta

www.futurelearn.com/courses/informed-health-consumer

Cochrane community online course – understanding healthcare evidence

www.cochrane.org/news/tags/authors/online-course-understanding-evidence-based-healthcare-foundation-action

National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools

www.nccmt.ca/resources/multimedia-eng.html#

Healthcare Improvement Scotland Critical appraisal course

www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/about_us/what_we_do/knowledge_management/critical_appraisal_tutorial.aspx
Acronym busters and glossaries

The NHS Confederation offers a handy NHS acronym buster www.nhsconfed.org/acronym-buster

HTAi offer a glossary of terms used in HTA www.htai.org/fileadmin/HTAi_Files/ISG/PatientInvolvement/Glossary/HTAiPatientAndConsumerGlossaryOctober2009_01.pdf

EUPATI glossary – terms used in medicine research and development www.patientsacademy.eu/index.php/en/glossary
The Scottish Health Technology Group common acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADTC</th>
<th>Area Drug and Therapeutics Committee Collaborative</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EN</td>
<td>Evidence note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERC</td>
<td>Evidence Review Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>HTA</td>
<td>Health Technology Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>HSR</td>
<td>Health Services Researcher</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMTO</td>
<td>Innovative Medicine Technology Overview</td>
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<tr>
<td>NICE</td>
<td>National Institute for Health and Care Excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NMT</td>
<td>Non-Medicine Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QALY</td>
<td>Quality-Adjusted Life Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCT</td>
<td>Randomised Controlled Trial</td>
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<tr>
<td>SHTG</td>
<td>Scottish Health Technology Group</td>
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Healthcare Improvement Scotland common acronyms

| HEI   | Healthcare Environment Inspectorate                |
| HIS   | Healthcare Improvement Scotland                    |
| ihub  | Improvement hub (formerly the improvement directorate) |
| PIU   | Public Involvement Unit                             |
| SHC   | Scottish Health Council                            |
| SIGN  | Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network        |
| SMC   | Scottish Medicine Consortium                       |
| SPSP  | Scottish Patient Safety Programme                  |
You can read and download this document from our website. We are happy to consider requests for other languages or formats. Please contact our Equality and Diversity Advisor on 0141 225 6999 or email contactpublicinvolvement.his@nhs.net

Healthcare Improvement Scotland

**Edinburgh Office**
Gyle Square
1 South Gyle Crescent
Edinburgh
EH12 9EB

**Glasgow Office**
Delta House
50 West Nile Street
Glasgow
G1 2NP

0131 623 4300

0141 225 6999

www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org