How HTA supports Innovation

Key aspects of health technology assessment (HTA) include:

- The assessment and appraisal of health technologies to determine their ‘value’ within health and social care
- The provision of information to support decision-making and policy.

The depth and breadth of HTA can be tailored according to the situation or decision-problem. For example, for technologies more likely to affect a large portion of the population, or have an important impact on health and care services, HTA may incorporate a detailed assessment of numerous HTA components. For new and innovative technologies, a more ‘light-touch’ HTA methodology may be more appropriate, whilst still including features such as:

  a) overview of the technology, condition and patient group affected
  b) description of why the technology is innovative
  c) rapid assessment regarding the performance, effectiveness and safety of the technology
  d) patient or user experience
  e) economic and costs considerations at a national or health board level.

As such, HTA can support innovation by providing early intelligence on health technologies that are being considered for use in health and social care. The overall aim is to encourage appropriate, early and timely adoption and diffusion of technologies that show promise but for which the evidence base is either emergent or partial.

The innovation pathway is dynamic, spanning research, industrial development and market introduction. Innovation activities often involve complex feedback mechanisms and interactive relationships between research and development, and health and care systems. For this reason, HTA support for innovation through SHTG is designed to be responsive to the needs of stakeholders.

SHTG is committed to providing HTA support across the innovation landscape. In collaboration with the Chief Scientists Office (CSO), SHTG will support innovation via the following two channels:

- **Innovative Medical Technology Overview (IMTO)**
  An ‘Innovative Medical Technology Overview’ (IMTO) is a high-level, light-touch summary of the evidence surrounding a new innovative technology. An IMTO seeks to offer an early indication of the strengths and weaknesses of the technology, with a view to contributing to local decision-making by NHS health professionals, managers and procurement colleagues.

  All new and innovative technologies need to have been registered on the NHSScotland Health Innovation Assessment Portal (HIAP) to be considered for IMTO assessment.

- **Support and guidance**

  SHTG provides HTA expertise, support and guidance to stakeholders, which includes signposting to other organisations as appropriate.