



Joint Action on HTA 2012-2015 Training Strategy for EUnetHTA partners and associates

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Was developed by Work Package 2 – Dissemination

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Context

One of the missions of EUnetHTA is to support efficient production and use of Health Technology Assessment (HTA) in countries in Europe.

The objectives of EUnetHTA Joint Action 2, Work Package 2 (WP2) is to “**increase awareness and understanding of the usefulness of the EUnetHTA tools, methods and results among EUnetHTA partners and stakeholders**”. In order to fulfil this objective, WP2 has organized various training activities during JA2 (i.e. face-to-face training courses, e-learning and webinars). Based on the experience from JA2 and the need for providing training in a targeted way to increase the actual use of the EUnetHTA tools and methods, this training strategy has been elaborated.

The training is not an end in itself but rather an instrument that supports national agencies to a) align with European-wide HTA standards and b) to form part of an organised HTA communication network (by using central data bases and exchange platforms (POP, Evident)). As such, the training is meant to assist national HTA agencies to adopt new HTA report production standards by using the HTA Core Model and The methodological guidelines and to facilitate the participation in key network activities (joint HTA production, databases, working groups, etc).

The training strategy is meant to guide the training needs that we have identified based on a survey report “HTA capacity building and training needs” undertaken by WP8 in JA1, surveys conducted during JA2 (WP3 general survey and a survey conducted by WP2 in JA2) and experience from organizing training activities during JA2. In addition to the training activities organized by WP2, WP8 organized three in-depth training courses in the use of the HTA Core Model.

The training strategy covers the various training needs of EUnetHTA partners and associates. It is set up in a format that takes into account changing training requirements in the future. Training needs analysis should be done periodically, in order to identify any change required and to adapt the training programme accordingly.

Aim

The aim of the training strategy is to provide general advice for the training activities provided by EUnetHTA so that the partners and associates can reach their training objectives.

Objectives

- EUnetHTA will be enables to participate in joint work across borders.
- EUnetHTA partners and associates will be enabled to use the EUnetHTA tools and methodology to prepare high quality, exchangeable HTA information.
- EUnetHTA partners should be able to educate new employees in their agencies to use EUnetHTA tools and methodology.

- EUnetHTA partners and associates will be enabled to integrate the tools and methodology into standard practice at their agencies.

Target groups

EUnetHTA partners and associates that produce or use Health Technology Assessment (HTA) information and that intend to use the EUnetHTA tools and methodology in their daily work and for HTA collaboration across countries.

Training levels

The training should be provided at two levels, in accordance with the previous experience of trainees:

- introduction to EUnetHTA tools and methodology for the beginners
- more in-depth training in the use of EUnetHTA tools for advanced professionals

Before each training session, the applicants should be asked to fill a questionnaire on their previous experience with HTA in general and in using EUnetHTA tools and methods and the training programme can be adapted to the appropriate level.

For JA3 it is recommended to design two separate training programmes: one basic/introductory course for the beginners and one advanced training course for those already working with the EUnetHTA tools. The applicants should choose one of the two programmes in accordance with their previous experience.

In addition, it is recommended to design a “train the trainers” course, for those who are involved not only in HTA production, but also/mainly in HTA training. For this programme, there should be developed specific training materials that emphasize how to teach about EUnetHTA tools and methodologies, describing the teaching methods and giving instructions on how to use the practical examples. The graduates could receive a certificate that qualifies them as “EUnetHTA” trainers. They should be enabled to replicate the EUnetHTA training, at their agency level.

Overview of EUnetHTA Tools and methodology

EUnetHTA's partners and associates have developed a range of tools and methodologies to facilitate high quality HTA collaboration in Europe.

EUnetHTA Tools

1. [EUnetHTA POP database](#)
2. EUnetHTA contact database (in the intranet)
3. EUnetHTA general group (in the intranet with news, document library, discussion...)
4. [HTA Core Model® Online](#) and HTA Core Model®
5. [EUnetHTA EVIDENT database](#)
6. [Adaptation glossary](#)
7. [Adaptation toolkit](#)

EUnetHTA methodological guidelines

Methodological guidelines for rapid relative effectiveness assessment (REA) of Pharmaceuticals

1. [Clinical endpoints](#)
2. [Composite endpoints](#)
3. [Surrogate endpoints](#)
4. [Safety](#)
5. [Health-related quality of life](#)
6. [Criteria for the choice of the most appropriate comparator\(s\)](#)
7. [Direct and indirect comparison](#)
8. [Internal validity](#)
9. [Applicability of evidence in the context of a relative effectiveness assessment](#)

Other methodological guidelines

10. [Meta-analysis of diagnostic test accuracy studies](#)
11. [Methods for health economic evaluations - A guideline based on current practices in Europe](#)
12. [Internal validity of non-randomised studies \(NRS\) on interventions](#)
13. [Process of information retrieval for systematic reviews and health technology assessments on clinical effectiveness](#)

Learning outcomes

After attending a training programme, participants should be able to:

- Describe the functionalities and purpose of the tool or methodology
- Know how the tool or method was developed
- Know where to find the tool or method
- Know who can access the tool or method
- Use the tool or method and being able to adapt it to a different setting
- Understand the strengths and limitations of the tool or method
- Know when to use and not to use the tool or method
- Know how the tool or method links to other tools and methods

Some national HTA agencies have already a deep understanding of EUnetHTA methods and tools while other agencies are still in the stage of building up capacities and need at the same time to build up know-how and skills for the fundamentals of HTA (e.g. study designs, methods in health economics, policy formulation, etc). Therefore, a modular training programme is envisaged to offer individuals and institutions at all stages of HTA proficiency suitable expertise upgrading.

For all training ‘units’ the potential learning gain should be very prominently displayed before the training session starts. E.g. ‘Evident Database: Objectives and main functionalities’; or ‘Core Model: Advanced use in the pharmaceutical field’.

Training modalities/methods

e-learning

The Intranet has been selected as the technical platform for the EUnetHTA e-learning. We have created web based modules for the different tools (POP, EVIDENT, HTA Core Model and Online tool) and methods (guidelines). These modules consist of webcasts (modified live recording of the presentations given at the face-to-face training courses or recorded power point presentations with voice over) and recorded webinars. The modules are published on the Intranet in the “EUnetHTA Virtual class-room”

Taking the specificities of the EUnetHTA network (several partners located at different places in Europe) and the need for a sustainable network (cost efficiency); the e-learning approach that was developed during JA2 should be generalised. This approach contains two applications: provision of e-learning material (webcasts, documents, ...) through an appropriate platform; and provision of webinars (using a web conferencing system). It is thus recommended that JA3 ensures that:

- Each tool or method developed by EUnetHTA comes along with training material that is available for distant learning and can be used flexibly
- Each tool or method developer plans regular webinars, with an emphasis on new-comers in the EUnetHTA networks

Webcasts

Strengths and main use: In short video clips certain tools, concepts and topics could be portrayed (e.g. how to get access and navigate in the Evident Database; or; ‘how to use the Assessment Elements Tables for the HTA Core Model’; or; ‘How to use the Research Protocol Design Generators’).

Webinars

Strengths and main use: Group oriented learning on one particular topic with the possibility of live discussions, questions and answers (can be used to present survey results; suggested modification of a reporting structure and standard, other information sharing, presentation of EUnetHTA tools etc)

Face-to-face training courses

Some of the tools will require further face-to-face training courses. The focus here should be on ‘case based’ learning. The face-to-face format allows for the highest level of interactivity where groups with the help of facilitators learn by using concrete ‘cases’ encountered in various agencies and countries.

Face-to-face training courses will be interactive, so that all current needs of each participant can be covered. They will include theoretical approach (lectures) followed by practical sessions.

Other training methods

Learning by doing – Specialists in new agencies are trained in using tools and methodologies while working together with more experienced colleagues for developing the joint HTA assessments or work on national uptake of existing assessments. This can be organized by the Lead Partner responsible for production of joint assessments, but facilitated by the lead Partner of the Activity Centre for training activities.

Experience exchange – either through mutual site visits organized “on purpose” or satellite seminars along with other meetings in which practical experience is shared on a given specific topic.

Community of Practice:

“A community of practice is a group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do, and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.”

Source: Wenger-Trayner, 2011. “**What is a community of practice?**”. (cited 2015-06-09) Available from: <<http://wenger-trayner.com/resources/what-is-a-community-of-practice/>>

The community of practice provides a network of peers that share knowledge and experience. This approach is a useful tool for supporting learning without the need for the development of formal training materials. Its success however will depend on group participants with a good level of commitment and organizational skills.

We will recommend continuing the community of practice for EUnetHTA partners and associates in charge of HTA dissemination.

We also recommend having a community of practice for EUnetHTA partners and associates to support national uptake of joint assessments.

Learning pathway

We have suggested a learning pathway to illustrate how the EUnetHTA tools and methods interact and which training modalities that can be useful for each tool and method, figure 1.

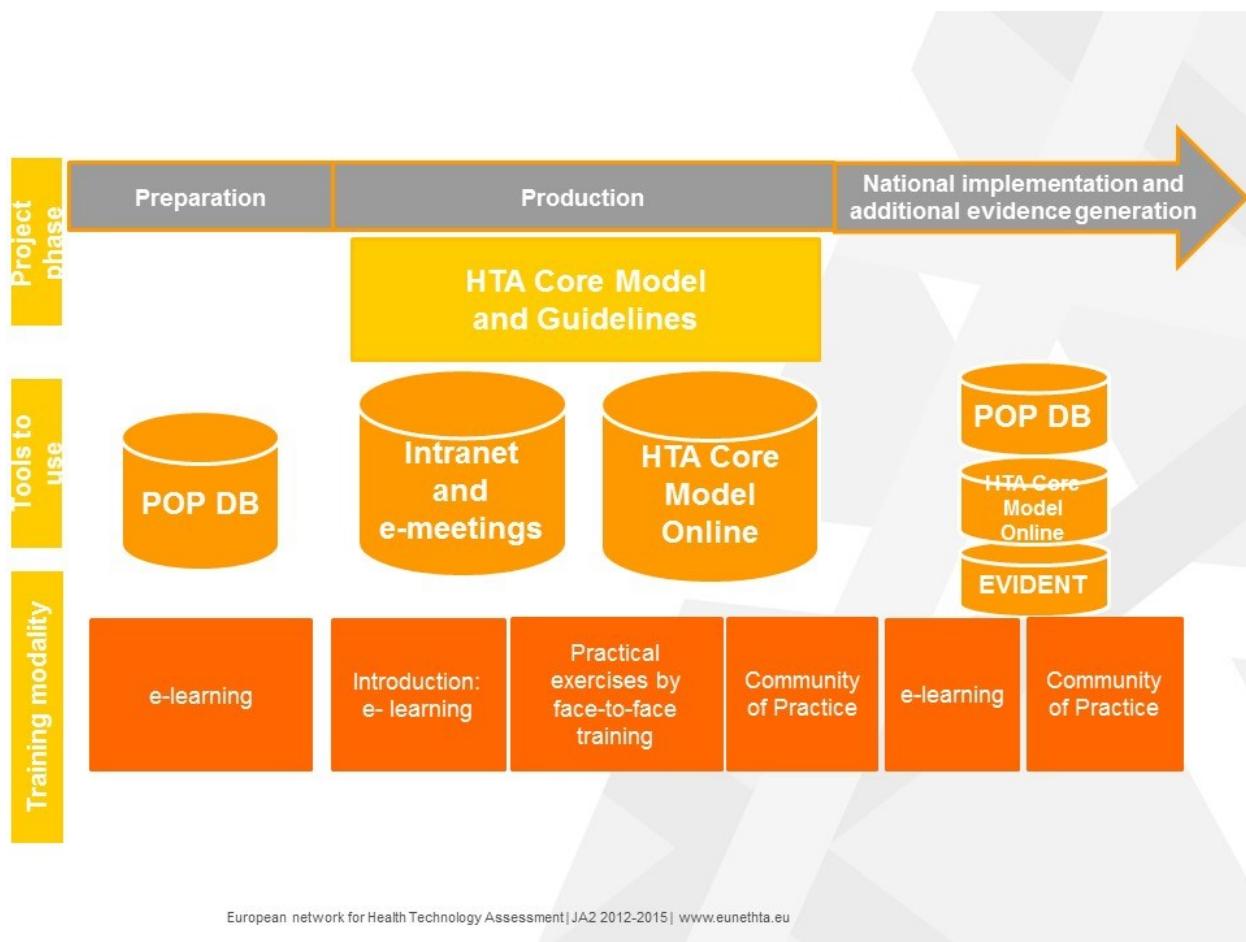


Figure 1. EUnetHTA learning pathway

EUnetHTA tools and methods and training modality

Based on JA2 experience we suggest the training modalities for each of the EUnetHTA tools and methods as shown in table 1.

Table 1. Suggested training modalities for the EUnetHTA tools and methods.

EUnetHTA tool/method	Face to face training course	User manual/personal reading	Community of Practice	Webinar	Webcast (slidecast)
Introduction to EUnetHTA	Include in the welcoming session if course is for beginners	A flyer would be useful			Yes
Intranet	Optional (only if linked to another face-to-face training)	Yes		Necessary (for FAQ)	Yes

EUnetHTA POP database	Optional (only if linked to another fact-to-face training)	Yes		Necessary (for FAQ)	Yes
HTA Core Model Online	Good to have (if linked to another face-to-face training)				Yes
HTA Core Model (full and rapid)	Necessary			Necessary (for FAQ)	
EVIDENT	Optional (only if linked to another fact to face training)			Necessary (for FAQ)	Yes
EUnetHTA methodological guidelines	Optional (only if linked to another fact to face training)		To consider	Good to have (for FAQ)	
E-meetings				Yes	
Adaption glossary					
Adaption toolkit				Yes	
National adaptation: guidance necessary (how to do/examples: full JA or only parts (e.g; effectiveness); including why no uptake (of parts)	necessary (not training but exchange session)	Would be useful	Required		

Training providers

The Lead Partner of the work packages that include EUnetHTA tools and methods must include in their work plans an activity on training and an activity on development of learning material. The training activities and the learning material should be adapted to either face-to-face training courses or to e-learning modalities as suggested in table 1.

In order to support the training providers, we recommend the development of a standard template for trainers including training objectives, target group, training format, learning outcomes, etc for each training activity.

We suggest some requirements/criteria the training providers should ideally comply with:

- Have the theoretical knowledge and practical experience with using the tools/methods as well as with teaching.
- For face-to-face trainings and webinars: have good teaching skills and be able to use modern teaching methods.

- Be able to participate in developing learning materials

Evaluation of training activities

By the end of each face-to-face training course, we recommend that the participants fill in a course evaluation form (mandatory) that will serve as feedback used to improve further training, but also to evaluate the training activities.

Also, the participants should be able to take a test that might also serve as a “teaching” method, being a self-test as part of e-learning modules or having the test results discussed with the students in the class.

Other training resources

For general courses on HTA (literature search, critical appraisal, health economics, meta-analysis, epidemiology, etc) we refer to the HTAi vortal¹, the ISPOR education program (<http://www.ispor.org/education/EducationIndex.asp>) and academic institutions.

Other resources might also include workshops, round tables, conferences, seminars or other scientific events on health technology assessment related subjects organized by EUnetHTA or to which EUnetHTA is invited to participate.

¹ [HTAi.org](http://www.htai.org) The HTAi vortal is a product of the [HTAi Interest Sub-Group on Information Resources \(IRG\)](#). EUnetHTA JA WP6 Lead Partner (KCE, Belgium) participated on the vortal renewal in the context of WP6 interoperability and external collaboration activities.

Implementation

For JA3 we recommend that the work package/Activity Centre responsible for training activities create a separate training implementation plan, within the framework of the current strategy:

Implementation plan = training plan + timeframe + responsible persons/agencies + evaluation criteria

Welcome package

We recommend preparing a EUnetHTA welcome package including basic information about EUnetHTA (history and organization) and brief information about EUnetHTA tools and methods. The information about EUnetHTA tools and methods could include links to e-learning material and an overview of training opportunities.

Post Implementation Evaluation/Expected results/Evaluation indicators

We recommend evaluating the impact of the training measures at individual agency and country level. Suggested areas of evaluation: degree of adaptation of EUnetHTA methods and tool, enhanced collaboration with other agencies and advancement of HTA skills.

Suggested output indicators: number (and type) of training activities, number (and structure) of trainees, % of trainees that acknowledged the usefulness of the information received in the course evaluation forms, % of agencies that adopted the EUnetHTA methodologies and tools, number of courses organized at the agency level using as trainers people trained within the EUnetHTA training activities (to see if the train the trainers principle works as intended), etc.