



eunethta

EUROPEAN NETWORK FOR HEALTH TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT

**Subdeliverable  
'negative list'  
Task Group for Common Phrases and  
GRADE**

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### Version history

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1.0	24-10-2019	ZIN	Final version	Executive Board
0.1	15-10-2019	ZIN	Draft subdeliverable	Task Group members

## AIM

- To avoid the use of sentences/words in an assessment report which may unintentionally imply or predetermine reimbursement decisions in some jurisdictions (creation of a negative list of phrases)
- To recommend on the use or non-use of GRADE or other internationally adopted evidence grading system in Joint Assessments, and possibly any modifications needed
- To provide a scenario-based set of standardised formulations regarding the textual presentation of results and conclusions in PT & OT Joint Assessments for increased consistency (creation of a positive list of phrases)

## BACKGROUND AND STATUS

The Task Group on Common Phrases and GRADE follows an iterative approach. The generation of a list of phrases that are *to be avoided* in Joint Assessments ('negative list'), because they may (unintentionally) imply or predetermine reimbursement decisions in some or all jurisdictions, is the first subdeliverable of this Task Group. The outcome of this will be transferred to the assessment report templates as guidance for authors.

The negative list is compiled based on a larger list of phrases that were identified as commonly used in national assessments and other producers of systematic reviews (such as the Cochrane Collaboration). The negative list consists of phrases herein of which a large majority of Task Group members indicated that those need to be avoided from their perspective.

This negative list is now being put forward to the Board for decision making as per mandate of the TG and will be incorporated in the assessment report templates for guidance.

The Task Group continues to work on phrases on which currently no clear consensus exists in terms of whether those should or shouldn't be used. Notably, many of those are dependent on the use and choice of an evidence grading system, because formulations/phrases are defined within the framework of the evidence grading system (independently of the chosen system).

The creation of the positive list of phrases is dependent on the outcome of the evidence grading systems/GRADE part of this Task Group. This part should lead to recommendations from this Task Group on a framework for the formulation of preferred phrases for results and conclusions. Therefore, before proceeding with the positive list, the Task Group will present the Board its recommendations on the use or non-use of GRADE or other internationally adopted evidence grading system in Joint Assessments.

Please see below for further details of the planned work.

## NEGATIVE LIST

**The Task Group reached consensus that phrases listed below should be avoided in Joint Assessments.**

Please note that those statements are identified based on a collection of commonly used phrases used by national agencies represented in the Task Group, as well as standardized phrases from other organizations such as the Cochrane Collaboration. This list therefore may not fully capture all possible variations, permutations or synonymous/analogous sentences.

**Overall conclusions**

Overall conclusions *which are not related to specific outcomes*, should be avoided.

Specific examples are:

- There is (major/substantial/moderate/minor/no) added benefit
- Benefit is uncertain
- The efficacy of drug A is comparable/better/inferior compared to B
- There is insufficient evidence to prove ...
- The intervention is more effective than ...

**Other**

The Task Group recommends that specific words should be avoided within the context of drawing conclusions that constitute vague, ambiguous or statistically flawed language.

Examples are:

- Dubious (as in: the effectiveness (...) is dubious)
- Trend (as in: there was a trend towards (...) observed)
- Proof (as in: the evidence shows proof of (...))
- Hint of (as in: there is a hint of an effect (...))
- No conclusions can be drawn