



HEALTH TECHNOLOGY
ASSESSMENT PHILIPPINES

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

 : hta@dost.gov.ph

 : hta.dost.gov.ph

 : [HTA Philippines](https://www.facebook.com/HTAPhilippines)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

HTA Philippines would like to thank all its stakeholders for all the support it received in accomplishing its milestones, and for the feedback that helped improve the HTA process. In all the steps to reach its milestones, HTA Philippines has striven to involve health providers/ medical societies and allied health professionals, hospitals, and health care organizations; national Department of Health program managers and implementers, including local government units; health authorities from municipal, provincial and city health governments; community leaders and sectoral representatives; patient groups/organizations and the general public; industries; and the academe and researchers.

Most importantly, the HTA Philippines thanks the past and present members of the HTA Council and the HTA Division who enabled all major undertakings leading to the fulfillment of its mandates under the Universal Health Care Law.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	2
MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON	4
INTRODUCTION TO HTA PHILIPPINES	5
2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS	12
TRANSITION FROM DOH TO DOST	12
POLICY & GOVERNANCE	17
TOPIC NOMINATION AND PRIORITIZATION ACTIVITIES	18
ASSESSMENTS TO INFORM POLICY-MAKING	20
LOCAL & INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS AND ENGAGEMENTS	22
INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS	22
LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS	26
MEETINGS, WORKSHOPS, SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES ORGANIZED AND ATTENDED BY HTA PHILIPPINES	30
2023 GAPS AND CHALLENGES	44
WAYS FORWARD	44
2023 HTA DIVISION BUDGET	45
2024 HTA DIVISION BUDGET	45
2024 GOALS AND WORK STREAMS	46
WS1: HTA GOVERNANCE: PROCESS AND METHODS	46
WS2: 2023 GENERAL TRACK IMPLEMENTATION (FOR CYCLE 2 PRIORITIZED TOPICS)	47
WS3. 2024 GENERAL TRACK OPENING	47
WS4. ASSESSMENTS CYCLE	47
WS5. RESEARCH AGENDA (NON-ASSESSMENT)	49
WS6. RESEARCH NETWORK DEVELOPMENT	49
WS7. TRANSITION-RELATED MATTERS	49
WS8. INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS	50
ANNEXES	51
ANNEX A. HTA GOVERNANCE IN THE PHILIPPINES AND OTHER PUBLISHED ISSUANCE	51
ANNEX B. SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENTS	53

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

Year 2023 was a turning point in the development lifeline of HTA Philippines (*collective term for the HTA Council and the HTA Division*). It was the year that we officially transitioned its operations from the wings of the Department of Health to a permanent nest in the Department of Science and Technology. The appropriate Joint Administrative Order (JAO) for this transfer was effectively drafted by the HTA Division. It was the year the HTA Council had to send off original members of the council whose terms ended and who no longer wished to be reappointed. This allowed the appointment of new members who went through a rigid selection process conducted by a committee with joint membership from DOH and DOST with support from the HTA Division. In 2023, the HTA Council/HTA Division released the 2023 HTA Topic Nominations and Prioritization Guide in preparation for the opening of 2023 HTA Topic Nomination (for Cycle 2 prioritized topics). A major attempt in simplifying the nomination forms and process while the prioritization criteria were reduced to the easily accessible information and ensuring absence of overlap with assessment criteria consumed a significant amount of time of HTA Division and HTA Council.

The 2023 HTA Topic Nomination (for Cycle 2 prioritized topics) generated 172 topics from 47 nominators which included 84 from marketing authorization holders; 20 from hospitals; 19 from patient groups/ civil society organizations (CSOs), 19 from DOH and PhilHealth organizations and 6 from professional societies. The next year (2024) will be busy prioritizing these 172 topics for possible assessment. Coordinating the nominations process was a test in commitment of the HTA Division. It will not be surprising if some faltered along the way.

On top of the above major activities – HTA Council/HTA Division was able to comply with its 80% target accomplishment of timely and quality evidence-based recommendations.

Participation in international engagements on HTA activities through the projects on ASEAN Regional Cooperation on the Harmonization of Health Technology Assessment (HTA) Reporting Formats on Clinical Efficacy, Effectiveness of Health Interventions and Technologies, the development of a Strategic Roadmap and Criteria for Efficient Hospitals toward Creating a Philippine Costing Manual for Health Economic Evaluations, and the Knowledge Exchange Sessions with the UK National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE).

Two very important and significant developments were the partnership with patient groups and CSOs in the 2023 HTA Topic Nomination and Topic Prioritization Guidelines Dissemination Forum and the Celebration of the 2023 World Patient Safety Day and St. Luke's Health Equity and Research Foundation. What may look like disparate groups are really united in purpose: that of consideration for the marginalized and an advocacy for health equity. We look forward to fruitful collaborations that will make a difference in health research and health technology assessments.

Year 2023 highlighted gaps and challenges in HTA in the Philippines that need to be addressed program- and policy-wise: lack of health technology assessment practitioners in the country, and lack of epidemiologic and economic health data as inputs in HTA. By the end of 2023 – HTA Philippines realized that it needs to put in place a monitoring and evaluation system that will follow through the implementation of its recommendations and learn lessons from the impact of health technology assessment in the health system, specifically on universal health care.

As we welcome 2024 under the auspices of DOST, the HTA Philippines remains committed to supporting the implementation of health technology assessment towards fulfilling the aspirations of the Universal Health Care Law for the well-being of all Filipinos through good governance, transparency, and inclusivity.


Marita V. Tolentino-Reyes, MD
 Chair, HTA Council Core Committee

INTRODUCTION TO HTA PHILIPPINES

Republic Act 11223 or the Universal Health Care Act formalized health technology assessment (HTA) as a priority-setting mechanism for program and policy development, regulation, and entitlement arbitration in the Department of Health (DOH) and the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth).

The HTA under this Act functions as an independent advisory body, guiding coverage and public funding for health interventions. It is composed of nine (9) Core Committee members and seven (7) Subcommittees. A screening committee composed of senior officials from the DOH, Department of Science and Technology (DOST), and PhilHealth selected members of the HTA Council through a series of nominations.

THE HTA COUNCIL CORE COMMITTEE

HTA COUNCIL 2023-2026:

Core Committee



Marita V. Tolentino Reyes, MD
Ethicist, Chairperson



Jacinto Blas V. Mantaring III, MD, MSc
Clinical Epidemiologist/
Evidence-based Medicine Expert,
Vice Chairperson



**Mario Philip R. Festin, MD, MSc,
MHPEd, FPOGS**
Public Health Epidemiologist



Aleli D. Kraft, PhD
Health Economist



Christopher Muñoz
Citizen's Representative



Soledad Natalia M. Dalisay, PhD
Sociologist/Anthropologist



**Gemiliano D. Aligui, MD, MPH,
PhD, DPPS**
Clinical Trial/Research Methods
Expert



DOST



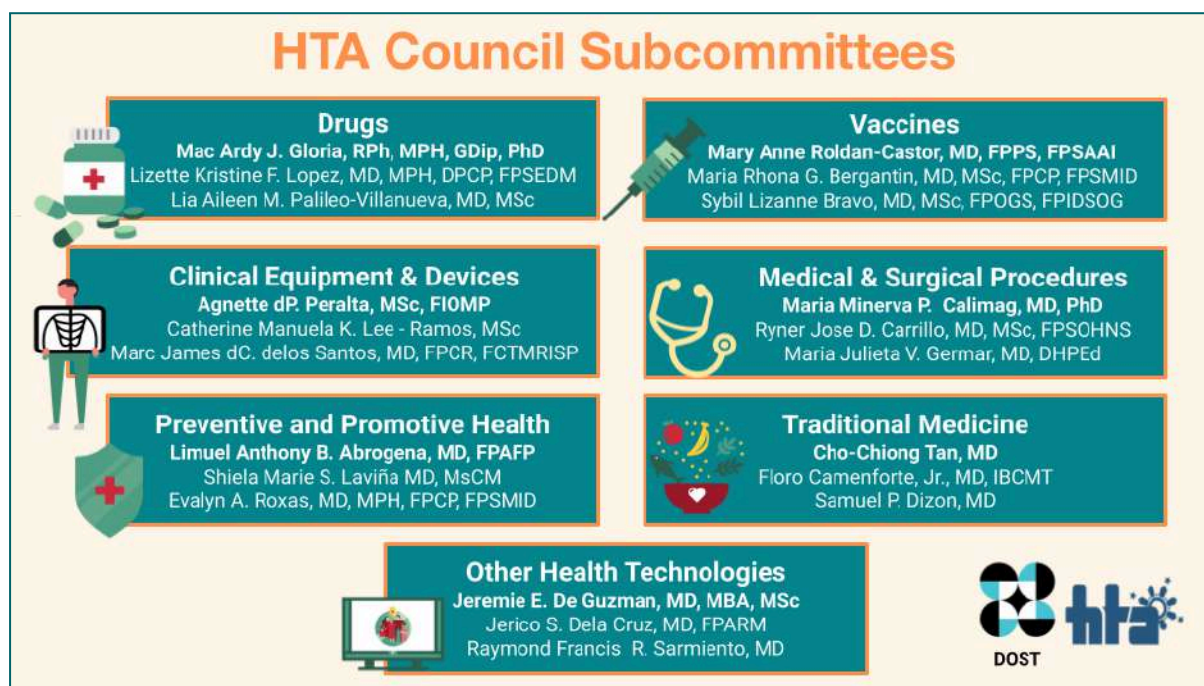
Josefina A. Tuazon, RN, MN, DrPH
Public Health Expert



Bu C. Castro, M.D. LI.B. FPSP
Medico-Legal Expert

The HTA Council Core Committee is composed of voting members from different fields of expertise. Together, they formulate final recommendations for policy- and decision-makers based on appraisals from different subcommittees. The health ethicist and medico-legal expert have four-year terms while the rest of the Core Committee members have three-year terms. The HTA Council Chairperson is elected among the Core Committee members.

THE HTA COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEES



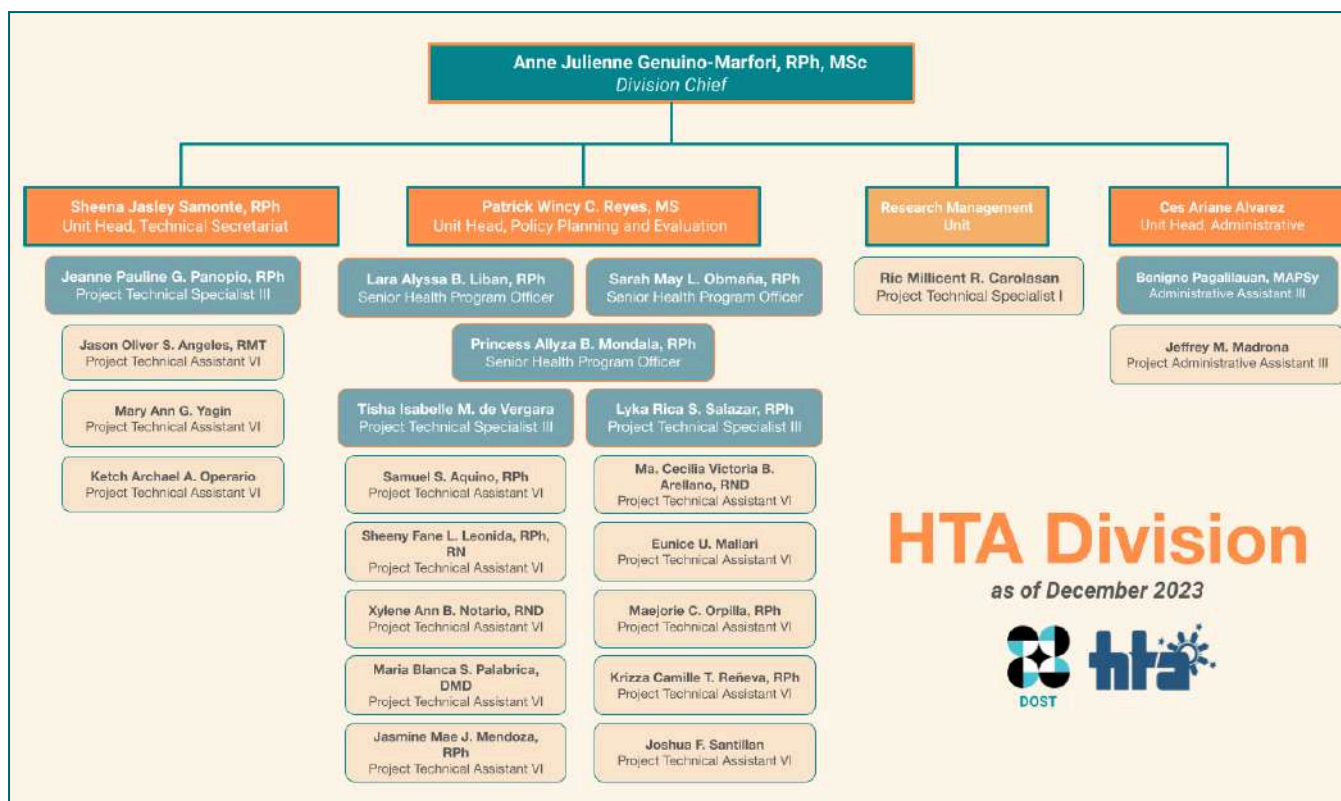
The HTA Council Subcommittees perform initial review of HTA reports and submissions from all relevant stakeholders. They are constituted according to the type of health technology. Specifically, they perform the following functions:

- exercise control over the expected quality, quantity, and timeliness of the HTA reports to be submitted to the HTA Council;
- evaluate the compliance of the Assessment Groups, with the agreed methodological standards in conducting assessments;
- consider the submission of topic nominators, the HTA report of the assessment team, and inputs from experts and patients to come up with preliminary recommendations for the Core Committee; and,
- review and endorse the initial appraisal reports by the Subcommittee to the HTA Core Committee for final discussion and recommendation.

Subcommittee members have three-year terms, and elect among themselves a chairperson.

THE HTA DIVISION

The HTA Division comprises the support staff of the HTA Council to effectively carry out its mandates. Based on the UHC Law, the supporting office for the HTA Council shall have a secretariat, and evidence generation and validation capacity.



Technical Secretariat Unit

The HTA Technical Secretariat Unit (TS Unit) provides the HTA Council with the necessary information and resources for discharging its duties under the UHC Law including the conduct of needed orientation and training programs for newly appointed members of the HTA Council. The unit also serves as the custodian of relevant documents and material including the minutes of the meetings, signed reports/recommendations by the HTA Council, and updating of the process guide in collaboration with the Council. Furthermore, the unit manages official communications between HTA Philippines and external entities. This unit also handles platforms for social engagements, such as creation and dissemination of publicity materials.

Policy, Planning and Evaluation Unit

The HTA Policy, Planning and Evaluation Unit (PPE Unit) is responsible mainly for the the conduct of in-house HTAs including the engagement with stakeholders as needed during topic assessments; validation of external assessments; the updating of the methods guide in collaboration with the Council; and, the development of policies and guidelines related to the implementation of HTA.

Research Management Unit

The HTA Research Management Unit (RM Unit) is responsible for managing externally-commissioned assessments, and for establishing the HTA Research Network (HTA RN).

The creation of the HTA RN and the process of commissioning out topics to members of the Network is detailed in a guideline separate from this document. Nevertheless, the assessment groups of the HTA RN adhere to the processes and methods prescribed in the latest versions of the HTA Process and Methods Guide.

Administrative Unit

The Administrative Unit (AU) provides administrative, human resource management, procurement, financial, supply and general services. The AU is also in charge of providing

legal and information technology (IT) functions, and facilitates the division's correspondence with DOST and other stakeholders with regard to administrative rules and regulations, and the division's adherence to the said measures and policies set by DOST.

OUR VISION

An institution that champions evidence-informed policies and decisions that will enable Filipinos to access quality, effective, and affordable health technologies

OUR MISSION

To provide technical guidance on the optimal use of health technologies in the pursuit of Universal Health Care in the Philippines

OUR GOALS

With the goal to institutionalize and implement HTA as a fair and transparent priority setting mechanism in the achievement of Universal Healthcare, the HTA Philippines plans to:

- Uphold good governance in the implementation of HTA by ensuring adherence to set standards
- Produce timely and evidence-based health technology assessment reports that are responsive to the needs of healthcare policymakers and providers
- Create a conducive ecosystem for HTA collaboration locally and internationally
- Ensure an inclusive and effective engagement with all stakeholders

HTA AS GUIDE TO GOVERNMENT FINANCING

Section 34 of the UHC Act mandates that the HTA Council shall determine, as an independent recommending body to the DOH and PhilHealth, the range of entitlements for the government financing of health technologies.

Through the evidence review and appraisal process of HTA, DOH, and PhilHealth can be guided on what health technologies are recommended for coverage under PhilHealth Benefit Packages or financed through DOH public health programs, as well as drugs for listing in the Philippine National Formulary (PNF) which serves as the basis for public financing of drugs.

Hence, upon the establishment of the HTA process in 2019 under the HTA Council, the existing process of the PNF System in DOH became subsumed under the overarching HTA process. This led to the endorsement of pending PNF topics to the HTA Council. Upon approval by the DOH Secretary of a positive HTA Council recommendation, the new drug or a new formulation of a currently PNF-listed drug shall be included in the Formulary which remains to be managed under the DOH Pharmaceutical Division. In 2023, there are efforts to establish a similar mechanism for medical devices through the Philippine Essential Medical Device List (PEMDL), which is also under the management of the DOH Pharmaceutical Division.

Depending on the policy questions, best available evidence and urgency of introduction on national health programs or benefit packages, the HTA process is classified into four process tracks:

- A. **General HTA Track** - the default process track for all eligible HTA topics (new or existing health technologies) which are not considered as any of the following:

expedited track for public health emergencies, minor inclusion track for Philippine National Formulary (PNF); or interim inclusion track for PEMDL. The General HTA Track follows all the standard HTA process steps from topic nomination to dissemination. Below are the key steps:

1. Topic Nomination
2. Topic Prioritization
3. Topic Assignment
4. Finalization of Research Question
5. Protocol Development
6. Topic Assessment
7. Review of Preliminary Assessments
8. Evidence Appraisal and Preliminary Recommendation
9. Provisional Recommendation
10. Stakeholder Consultation/Feedback
11. Finalization of the Recommendation
12. Decision by the DOH Secretary or PhilHealth Board of Directors
13. Dissemination

B. Expedited Track for Public Health Emergencies - applicable to health technologies that are to be used in public health emergencies, to ensure prompt delivery of HTA recommendations, in response to urgent implementation timelines. Below are the key steps in the expedited track:

1. Topic-Nomination
2. Topic Assignment
3. Finalization of Research Question
4. Topic Assessment
5. Review of Preliminary Assessments
6. Evidence Appraisal and Preliminary Recommendation
7. Finalization of the Recommendation
8. Decision by the DOH Secretary or PhilHealth Board of Directors
9. Dissemination

C. Minor Inclusions for PNF - applicable for drugs and vaccines that are already listed in the PNF for the same indication. This inclusion will not result in a significant change in bioavailability and *meaningful clinical outcomes** with the PNF-listed drugs/vaccines. Examples of these minor inclusions are changes in:

- a. strength, net content, OR
- b. packaging OR
- c. pack size/volume**

**meaningful refers to final outcomes or epidemiologically validated surrogate outcomes*

** *The amount of product in a pack or container.*

Below are the key steps in the minor inclusion track:

1. Topic Nomination
2. Topic Assessment
3. Evidence Appraisal and Preliminary Recommendation
4. Provisional Recommendation
5. Stakeholder Consultation/ Feedback
6. Finalization of the Recommendation
7. Decision

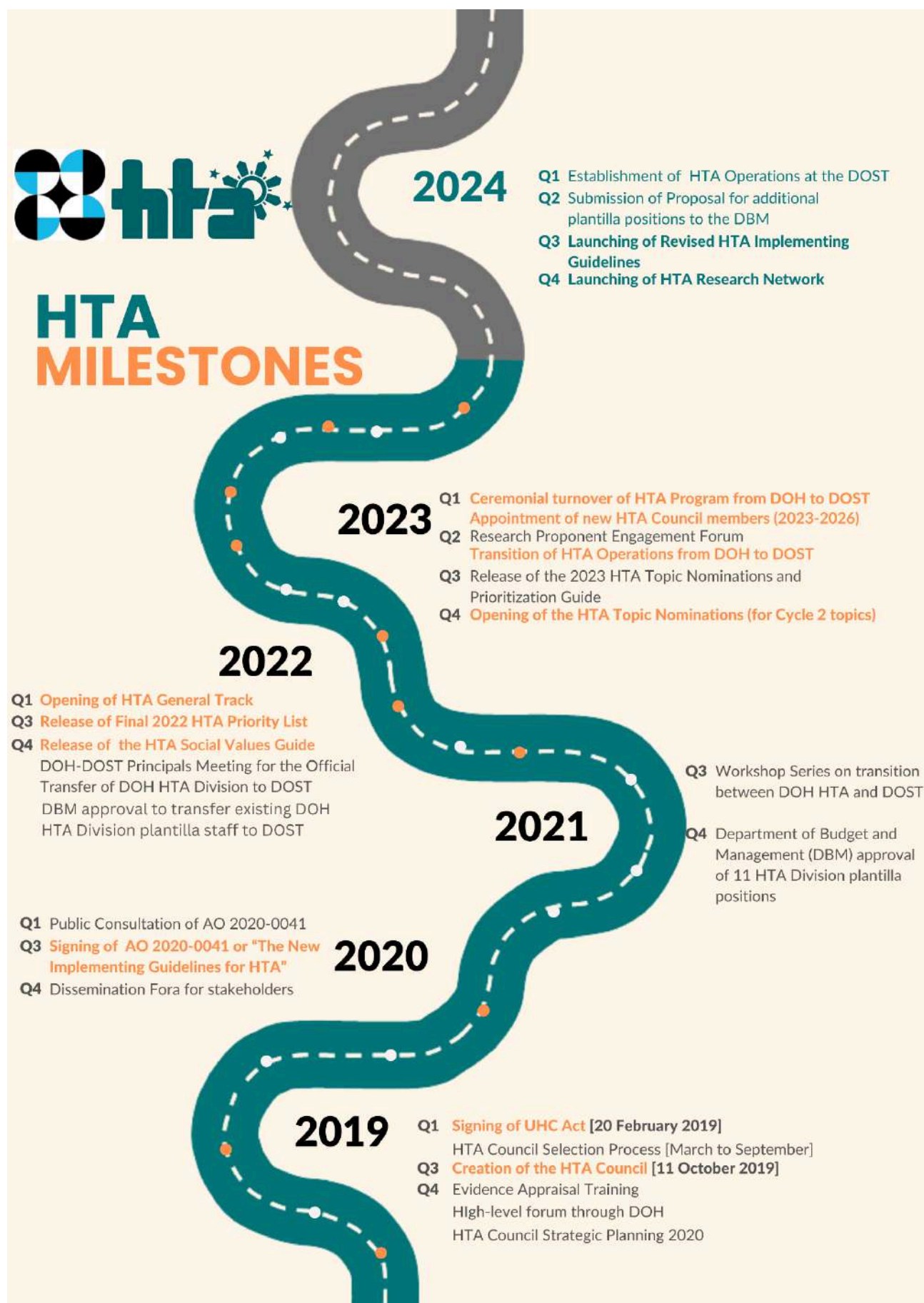
8. Dissemination

D. **Interim Inclusion Track for PEMDL** - an interim process track for clinical equipment and devices which are: (1) already part of the WHO Essential Medical Devices List (EMDL); (2) already part of CPGs crafted or adopted by the DOH National Practice Guidelines Program (NPGP); (3) included in the list of medical devices required for licensing of health facilities by the DOH Health Facilities and Services Regulatory Bureau (HFSRB) or (4) the standard of care as validated by the pool of experts to be included in the PEMDL. This interim process track shall only be applicable during the transitional period from 2022 to 2025 while the EAC and MDU are in the process of including clinical equipment, and devices used for the majority of the conditions being purchased by government hospitals in the PEMDL. Medical devices that do not meet any of the four aforementioned classification are required to undergo the general track HTA. After this transitory period, clinical equipment and devices nominations for HTA shall be processed under the General HTA track. Below are the key steps in the interim inclusion track for PEMDL:

1. Topic Screening
2. Evidence Appraisal
3. Preliminary Recommendation
4. Consultation on Preliminary Recommendation
5. Final Recommendation
6. Decision by the DOH Secretary or PhilHealth Board of Directors
7. Dissemination

Detailed guidelines for every step of each process track, along with the documents relevant to these steps and their respective timelines are found in the track-specific sections.

All HTA process steps involve internal and external stakeholders following a participatory approach. In order to standardize protocol on key areas of stakeholder engagement, and ensure consistency in the process, HTA Philippines is developing the HTA Stakeholder Engagement Guide which provides the specific strategies and methodologies regarding the involvement of external stakeholders in different types of health technologies and at all stages of the HTA process. The Guide is followed for the general and expedited HTA processes and minor drug inclusions.



Note: For milestones related to assessments, please see the ['ASSESSMENTS TO INFORM POLICY-MAKING'](#) Section.

HTA IN THE PHILIPPINES: A ROADMAP

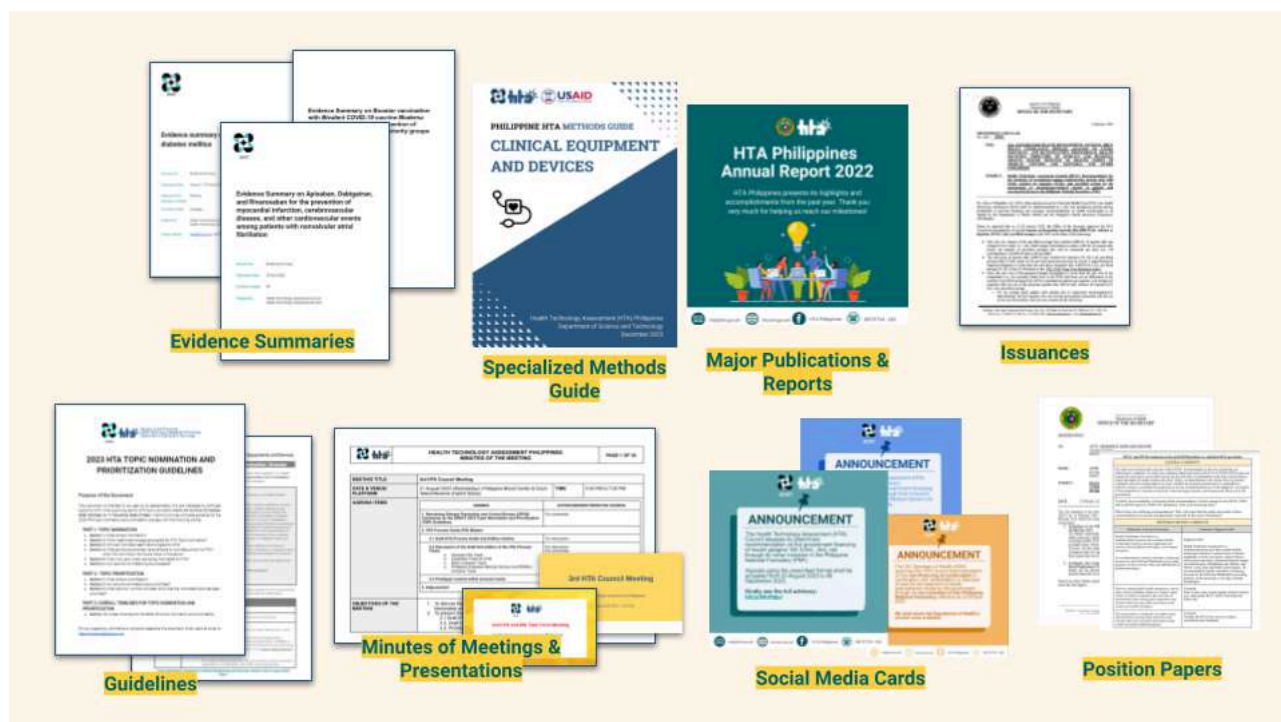
The HTA Roadmap highlights the key accomplishments achieved by the HTA Philippines from 2019 to 2023, and major developments anticipated in 2024. The roadmap is modified annually based on changing priorities. It is notable that the HTA operations were transferred from the DOH to the DOST in 2023, and the HTA Division was able to draft the Joint Administrative Order (JAO) on the guidelines for the said transfer.

HOW THE ANNUAL REPORT IS ORGANIZED

This fifth annual report (first version in 2019) presents updates on our milestones, mainly on the accomplished assessments and HTA Council recommendations; the policy guidances crafted for the information of our key stakeholder groups, challenges encountered, and a preview of our 2024 plans and goals. As the HTA Philippines maintains openness to feedback, this annual report shall also serve as reference for our key stakeholders to monitor the progress of the HTA process as well as the efficiency of its review methodologies.

2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Technical products of the HTA Philippines



Correspondence: Average of 50 emails, letters and referrals with stakeholder groups per day

TRANSITION FROM DOH TO DOST

The transition team from the DOST went to the HTA Philippines office under the DOH on 13 January 2023 to discuss status updates and align on the next steps, in parallel with the

ocular inspection of facilities to prepare for the anticipated physical reporting of staff at the DOST within the year. This is a follow-through on the ongoing efforts of both agencies to fully transition HTA Philippines to the DOST within 5 years of establishment and operation at the DOH based on the UHC Act. The visit convened representatives from the following teams:

- DOH Health Regulation Team (HRT) headed by OIC-Undersecretary Charade Mercado-Grande
- HTA Council led by Chairperson Dr. Marita Reyes
- DOH HTA Division headed by Chief Ms. Anne Julienne Marfori
- DOST Office of the Undersecretary for Scientific and Technical Services (STS) headed by Undersecretary Maridon Sahagun
- DOST Administrative and Legal Service (ALS) headed by Assistant Secretary Diana Ignacio
- DOST Finance Management Service (FMS) headed by Director Racquel Alvendia
- DOST Philippine Council for Health Research and Development (PCHRD) headed by Executive Director Jaime Montoya
- DOST General Service Division (GSD) led by OIC-Head Mr. Jhoven Litana





On 20 February 2023, the HTA Philippines paid a courtesy visit to the DOST as part of its transition from the DOH. DOST Secretary Renato U. Solidum, Jr., Undersecretary for Scientific and Technical Services Maridon O. Sahagun, and Assistant Secretary for Administrative and Legal Affairs Diana L. Ignacio and their staff members welcomed the HTA Council Chairperson, Dr. Marita T. Reyes and HTA Division Chief, Ms. Anne-Julienne G. Marfori. The HTA Division was also represented by Ms. Sheena Jasley G. Samonte (Head, Technical Secretariat Unit), Mr. Patrick Wincy C. Reyes (Head, Policy, Planning and Evaluation Unit), and Ms. Ces Ariane F. Alvarez (Head, Administrative Unit). The courtesy visit was mainly aimed at fully understanding the HTA process, and aligning on the ceremonial turnover of HTA operations to the DOST.



The DOH officially transferred its HTA operations to the DOST through a ceremonial turnover of the HTA Council and HTA Division on 06 March 2023 at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC), Manila. UHC legislator, Governor of Quezon, Hon. Angelina “Helen” Tan who previously chaired the Committee on Health of the House of Representatives for six (6) years, also gave their messages of support as champions of UHC and HTA Council. DOST Undersecretary for Scientific and Technical Services Maridon O. Sahagun and DOH Assistant Secretary for Health Regulation Team Atty. Charade Mercado-Grande whose offices the HTA Division directly reports to, also participated in the turnover.

DOST Secretary Solidum expressed the Department’s commitment to strengthen the implementation of the HTA process through research, capacity building, and partnerships. At present, the HTA Philippines is in partnership with the Philippine Council for Health Research and Development (DOST-PCHRD) for the conduct of selected assessments from the 2023 HTA priority topics through commissioning with external research entities. The DOH and the DOST shall continue to work together on their mandates, capacity building and overall continuity of the current efforts. The full press release can be accessed here: [DOH TRANSFERS OPERATIONS OF HTA TO DOST, RECOGNIZING PARTNERSHIP AND NETWORK FOR STRENGTHENED HEALTH TECHNOLOGY CAPACITY - Department of Health](#)



POLICY & GOVERNANCE

The HTA Philippines is involved in several policy crafting that are relevant to its processes and research agenda. The following are the highlights for 2023:

- **2023 Topic Nomination and Prioritization Guidelines**

The HTA Philippines opened the Topic Nomination and Prioritization of cycle 2 general HTA track topics from 04 October to 17 November 2023. This is following the first implementation of the said processes in 2022. Based on the feedback from stakeholders and the actual experience of the HTA Philippines in 2022, there had been changes in the process, clarity on which health technologies are eligible for HTA through algorithms, HTA Topic Nomination Forms and the HTA Prioritization Criteria. With the aim to provide clear guidance to interested nominators while taking into account their comments and/or insights on the proposed improvements, upon public consultation (01-15 August 2023), the HTA Philippines released the said guidelines on 31 August 2023: bit.ly/2023NomPrioGuidelines

- **Draft Administrative Order (AO) - Process Guide (PG) - Methods Guide (MG) Revision for Public Consultation**

The HTA Philippines is currently revising the HTA implementing guidelines through DOST Administrative Order titled “Revised Implementation Guidelines on Health Technology Assessment to Guide Funding Allocation and Coverage Decisions in Support of Universal Health Care” and its annexes (i.e., Philippine HTA Process Guide 2nd edition, Philippine HTA Methods Guide 2nd edition).

A workshop on the revisions of the said implementing guidelines was conducted by the HTA Philippines as part of the regular updating of the HTA process and methods based on real experiences and international standards.

The updated implementation guidelines, the second edition of the Process Guide and Methods Guides, together with the HTA Stakeholder Engagement Framework also underwent stakeholder consultation from 18 December 2023, until 04 January 2024.

The final version of these documents are expected to be released in the 2nd quarter of 2024.

- **Philippine HTA Methods Guide (MG) for Clinical Equipment and Devices (CED)**

The HTA Philippines released the first edition of the Philippine HTA Methods Guide for CED with the support of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) Medicines, Technologies, and Pharmaceutical Services (MTaPS) Program. This MG for CED aims to provide mandatory guidance to researchers (both internal and external assessors) in conducting HTA for CEDs based on the prioritized topics and producing a standardized HTA report that will be used to inform all public funding, coverage, and resource reallocation/optimization decisions made by the DOH and PhilHealth. This methods guide is a complementary document to the Philippine HTA Methods Guide (also referred to as the main HTA methods guide) focusing on the steps where either methods or processes are different from the main HTA guidance and is the first of the several HT- or topic - specific methods guide the HTA Philippines is planning to release.

- **Contributions to policies/ programs**

- **DOH**

- IRR RA 11959: Regional Specialty Centers Act

- National Stakeholders' Consultative Workshop on Cervical Cancer Elimination and Primary Prevention in the Philippines
 - National Integrated Cancer Control Council (NICCC) Cancer Strategy Workshop
 - Pharmaceutical Division (PD)-MDU policy consultations
 - Mapping the Pharmaceutical System: A Community Model-Building
 - Systems mapping workshops on Comprehensive Outpatient Drug Benefit Workshop
 - Annual Evidence Summit 2023 on National Practice Guidelines Program (Evidence Generation and Management Division or EGMD)
 - House of Representatives Inquiry on the Excess Deaths in 2021
 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Bill
 - Universal Health Care Bill Amendments
- **DOST**
 - National Unified Health Research Agenda (NUHRA) 2023-2028
- **HTA Division Citizen's Charter**
As part of stakeholder engagement, the HTA Division has also been working on its Citizen's Charter to supplement stakeholder-centered processes of HTA, aside from what is stated in the HTA Process Guide. The HTA Division has an ongoing consultation with the Anti-Red Tape Act (ARTA) in ensuring that the contents of the Citizen's Charter are responsive to the needs of the general public given that HTA is a highly technical multi-stage process. To date, the submitted Citizen's Charter is for review and approval of the ARTA. In parallel, the HTA Division endeavors to revise the document in the context of its operations at the DOST, and will make the document public as soon as it is approved for dissemination.
 - **Public Service Continuity Plan (PSCP)**
To ensure the continuity of these services and mandates of the HTA Council and HTA Division even in the face of unprecedented events, a PSCP was developed. It aims to provide the procedure and protocol that must be undertaken by the HTA Division staff in response to an emergency. It includes necessary measures to ensure the continuity of operations through the restoration of mission-essential functions, processes, and procedures when normal operations are not viable. Likewise, this plan is expected to facilitate the effective implementation of recovery strategies and pave the way to a speedy return to normalcy.

TOPIC NOMINATION AND PRIORITIZATION ACTIVITIES

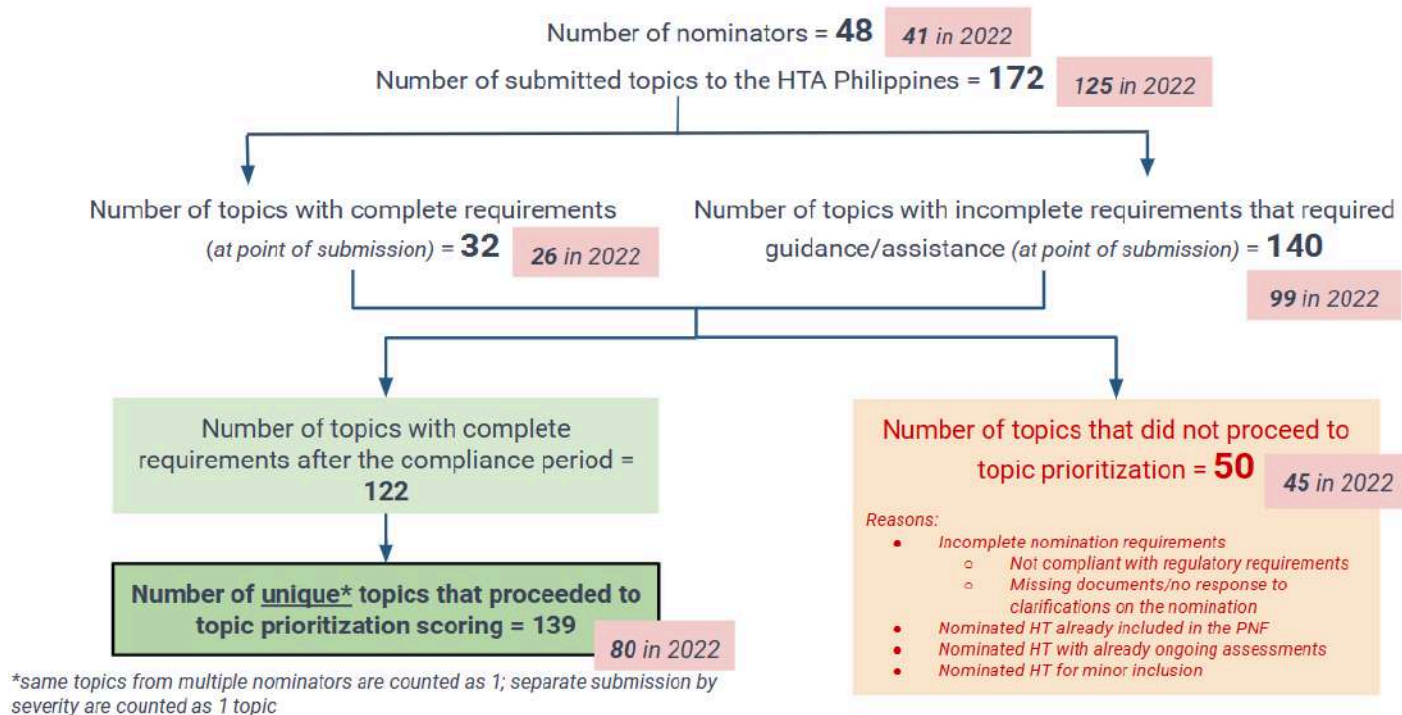
2023 HTA Topic Nomination (04 October to 17 November 2023)

Topic Nomination is the process of referring topics (i.e., health technology and indication of use) for assessment to provide guidance to policymakers in healthcare coverage decisions. With process improvements based on the experience of the HTA Philippines in 2022 which resulted in the release of the [2023 Topic Nomination and Prioritization Guidelines](#), the number of topics nominated has increased. Among the notable changes in the guidelines were the availability of the algorithms to determine the eligibility of health technologies for HTA. Also, there were no longer separate forms for new and existing health technologies because all relevant probing questions were included in the unique nomination forms per health technology type.

There were various dossier submissions from key stakeholder groups as follows:

- 19 from patient groups/ civil society organizations (CSOs);
- 84 from marketing authorization holder;
- 20 from hospitals;
- 6 from professional societies; and
- 19 from DOH and PhilHealth

Below is the comparison of numbers with the 2022 nominations:



Aside from having a larger number of nominations, another significant accomplishment is the increased nominations from patient groups and CSOs which implies that the current process is much easier to follow and better disseminated.

Finally, for the 139 unique topics that proceeded with Topic Prioritization, below is the breakdown of topics per disease area:

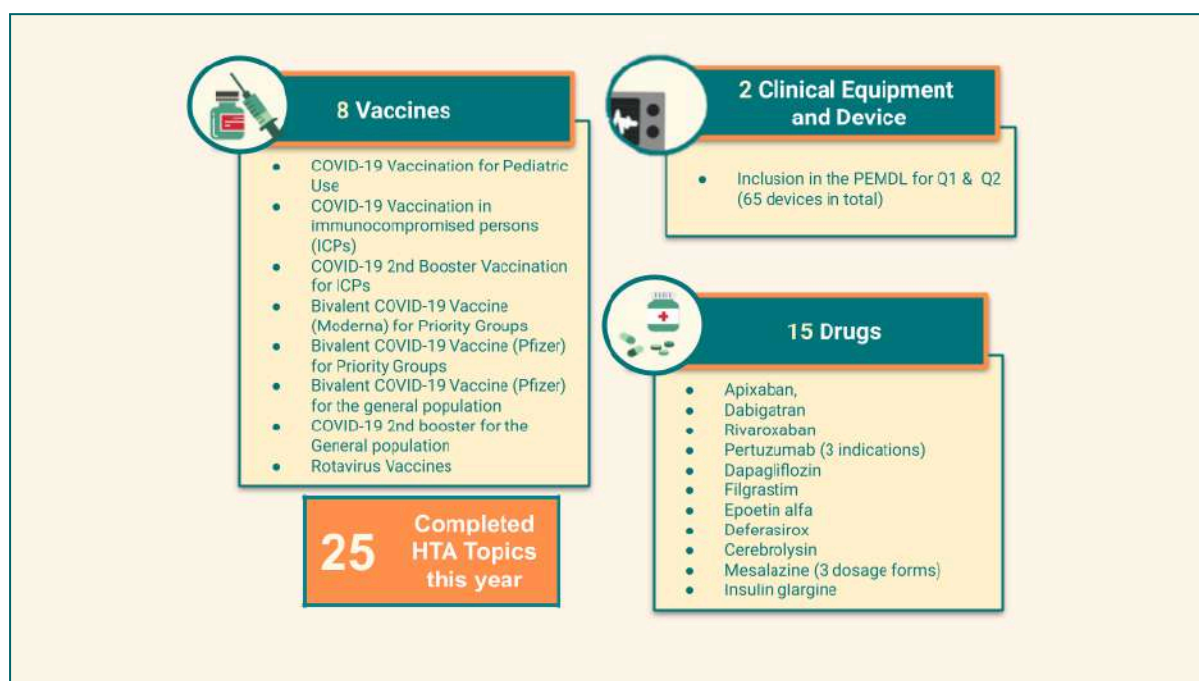
- Oncology = 41
- Infectious disease = 24
- Neurology = 11
- Dermatology = 11
- Endocrinology = 9
- Cardiology = 8
- Rheumatology = 5
- Pulmonology = 4
- Hematology = 4
- Gastroenterology = 4
- Orthopedics = 3
- Reproductive Health = 2
- Neonatology = 1
- Dental = 2
- Anesthesiology = 2
- Urology = 1
- Otolaryngology = 1
- Ophthalmology = 1
- Obstetrics = 1
- Nephrology = 1
- Intensive Care = 1
- Immunology = 1
- Others = 1

Topic Prioritization for Cycle 2 Topics (from the 2023 Topic Nominations)

For the 139 unique topics that will proceed with Topic Prioritization, they will undergo HTA Division-level pre-processing, scoring at Subcommittee level and final deliberation at Core Committee level using the HTA Prioritization Criteria Tool detailed in the above mentioned guidelines. The provisional HTA topic priority list for stakeholder consultation/ feedback as well as the final HTA topic priority list for cycle 2 topics are expected to be released in May 2024.

ASSESSMENTS TO INFORM POLICY-MAKING

For 2023, 25 out of 31 (80.65%) targeted topics were completed (i.e., completed recommendations), including seven public health emergencies (PHE) topics, nine UHC topics, seven minor inclusion topics, and two quarters of PEMDL topics (i.e., 65 topics for inclusion in the PEMDL).



The table below summarizes the number of topics completed in 2022. Details on these topics are further presented in *Annex B*.

	Public Health Emergency (PHE) Topics	Philippine National Formulary (PNF) topics	Minor Inclusion Topics	Philippine Essential Medical Devices List
Number of Topics with Positive Recommendation	6	5	7	2 batches (65 equipment and devices)
Number of Topics with Negative Recommendation	1	4	0	0

Number of Topics Adopted by DOH and/or PhilHealth	7	9	7	2 batches (65 equipment and devices)
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2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS VERSUS TARGETS

INDICATOR	TARGETS	ACTUAL ACCOMPLISHMENT
Percent of timely and high quality evidence-based recommendations <i>(out of all priority topics submitted to HTA Division and HTA Council)</i>	80%	80.65% (25/31) <i>Note: PEMDL topics were counted as 1 number per batch. In 2023, two batches were released (i.e., PEMDL Q1 and Q2). Hence, this was counted as 2 only.</i>

BREAKDOWN
Expedited (COVID-19) topics: 100.00 % (7/7)
Universal Health Care (UHC) topics: 75.00% (18/24)

Comparative accomplishments through the years

% Percent of timely and high-quality evidence-based recommendations <i>(out of all priority topics submitted to the HTA Division and the HTA Council)</i>				
Assessment topics	2023	2022	2021	2020
1. Expedited (COVID-19)	100.0% (7/7)	90.00% (18/20)	100.00% (40/40)	100.00% (15/15)
2. Universal Health Care	75.00% (18/24)	42.86% (3/7)	100.00% (9/9)	100.00% (1/1)
2.1 General Track	60.00% (9/15)	N/A	N/A	N/A
2.2. Urgent (DOH and PhilHealth)	N/A	N/A	100.00% (4/4)	100.00% (1/1)
2.3. Minor Inclusion	100.0% (7/7)	42.86% (3/7)	100.00% (5/5)	(0)
2.4. PEMDL	100% (2/2)	N/A	N/A	N/A
		<i>Note: Initial list of PEMDL topics</i>		

		<i>was released in 2022 but it was not included in the target indicators. Quarterly release of recommendations for PEMDL started in 2023.</i>		
OVERALL	80.65% (25/31)	77.78% (21/27)	100.00% (49/49)	100.00% (16/16)

LOCAL & INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS AND ENGAGEMENTS

INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

- **ASEAN Regional Cooperation on the Harmonization of Health Technology Assessment (HTA) Reporting Formats on Clinical Efficacy, Effectiveness of Health Interventions and Technologies**

The HTA Division is currently co-leading with the Malaysian Health Technology Assessment (MaHTAS) in a project titled “ASEAN Regional Cooperation on the Harmonization of HTA Reporting Formats on Clinical Efficacy and Effectiveness of Health Interventions and Technologies” which will build and expand on the ASEAN Health Cluster 3 Work Programme for 2021-2025. It is intended to result in more timely health technology assessments that efficiently utilizes global knowledge on clinical evidence, leading to information becoming available faster to national health authorities who make decisions on provision or reimbursement. More timely and informed decision-making contributes directly to health SDG3, in particular to SDG 3.8 on Universal Health Coverage. The initial work focuses on harmonizing the HTA reporting formats on clinical efficacy and effectiveness, thereby reducing duplication of effort and freeing up more time for other member states to focus on the more context-specific components of a health technology assessment. This will involve having a consensus among the ASEAN Member States (AMS) on the review methods and common checklists and practical tools to be used for joint assessments. Finally, this project will also include discussions on the platform that the AMS can use for sharing HTA reports which will allow other countries to have access to completed HTAs for their own priority assessments.

- Partner Organizations and Respective Roles:
 - ASEAN as the main facilitator and secretariat of the project
 - Malaysian Health Technology Assessment Section (MAHTAS) as the co-lead of the project
 - World Health Organization (WHO) as technical assistance providers
- Objectives of the Project:
 - Develop harmonized reporting formats on clinical efficacy and effectiveness as a reference to inform policy making in healthcare;
 - Develop common checklists and other practical tools including generic disease impact models, appraisal tools, and evidence adoption and adaptation tools;
 - Develop common review methods and other technical arrangement (e.g., product criteria, mechanism for submitting product,

- data/information confidentiality, frequency and timeline, financing) for the joint assessments;
 - Develop joint HTA reports on clinical evidence for efficacy and effectiveness on two health technology tracks [one on pharmaceuticals (drugs and vaccines) and one on medical devices] utilizing the proposed common review method and reporting format; and
 - Develop a website/platform to share all outputs from the sub-activities.
 - Expected outputs of the project:
 - Harmonized reporting formats on clinical efficacy and effectiveness as a reference to inform policy-making in healthcare;
 - Common checklists and other practical tools including generic disease impact models, appraisal tools, and evidence adoption and adaptation tools;
 - Common review methods and another technical arrangement (e.g. product criteria, a mechanism for submitting product, data/information confidentiality, frequency, and timeline, financing) for the joint assessments;
 - Joint HTA reports on clinical evidence for efficacy and effectiveness on two health technology tracks [one on pharmaceuticals (drugs and vaccines) and one on medical devices] utilizing the proposed common review method and reporting format; and
 - Website/platform to share all outputs from the sub-activities.
 - On 8th September 2023, the HTA Philippines and the Malaysian Health Technology Assessment Section (MaHTAS) co-led a workshop on HTA Harmonization on Reporting Format on Clinical Effectiveness for Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices held in Putrajaya, Malaysia. This was attended physically by representatives from Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines and virtually by representatives from Indonesia, Lao PDR and Myanmar.

HTA agencies from the ASEAN member states (AMS) shall continue their efforts to bolster full participation and support to underrepresented AMS for the success of this undertaking.



Representatives from the HTA Philippines, Malaysian Health Technology Assessment Sector (MaHTAS), Singapore Agency for Care Effectiveness (ACE), and Health Intervention and Technology Assessment Program (HITAP) Thailand during the HTA Harmonization on Reporting Format on Clinical Effectiveness for Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices at Mercure Living, Putrajaya, Malaysia.

● Development of the HTA Costing Library

The metaHealth, through technical assistance from the WHO to the HTA Division, has been commissioned to create a roadmap for the HTA Costing Manual of Procedures (MOP) for use in health economic evaluations in the Philippines:

- Objectives of the project
 - To develop a roadmap for developing a standardized hospital cost library for use in health economic evaluations in the Philippines
 - To develop criteria for selecting efficient hospitals for the HTA Division's costing purposes
 - To establish guidelines for using PhilHealth costing data for costing purposes in the context of health technology assessment by HTA Division.
- Expected outputs of the project:
 - Strategy Roadmap for HTA Costing MOP
 - Desk review of criteria for selecting efficient hospitals, particularly among LMICs
 - Assessment of data quality and data gaps and recommendation to address data limitations
 - Validated criteria for selecting efficient hospitals in the Philippines, based on routinely collected data by PhilHealth
 - Guidelines on how PhilHealth costing data can be used by HTA Division for costing purposes in the context of health technology assessment

As of October 2023, the first submission of the draft technical report on the Development of a Strategic Roadmap and Criteria for Efficient Hospitals toward Creating a Philippine Costing Manual for Health Economic Evaluations was made by metaHealth to the HTA Philippines. A meeting has yet to be set to facilitate the revisions and closing of the project.

- **National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Knowledge Exchange Sessions**

The United Kingdom (UK) NICE is one of the leading HTA bodies of the international community. With its guidance and established protocols, other emerging HTA bodies usually pattern their processes after that of NICE and are engaged with HTA Philippines in multiple knowledge exchange series with the aim to increase the capacity of the HTA Philippines to conduct HTA. *More details on UK-NICE engagements will be seen in the following sections on international engagements.*

This 2023, the following UK NICE International HTA knowledge transfer sessions were conducted:

- HTA Research Network (28 March 2023)
- Early engagement and early HTA (20 April 2023)
- Experiences in managed access agreements for rare diseases/cancer with unmet need (04 May 2024)

- **US-ASEAN Business Council Health Dialogues: Innovation for Health**

On 15 November 2023, HTA Council Chairperson Dr. Marita Tolentino-Reyes and HTA Division Chief Ms. Anne Julienne Marfori attended the US-ASEAN Business Council Health Dialogues: Innovation for Health. This served as a platform to discuss ways by which the American private sector can collaborate with the HTA Council in digitizing healthcare systems, optimizing HTA, and strengthening the primary care network in the Philippines.

Through this event, the US-ASEAN Business Council hopes to enable a multi-stakeholder approach in identifying opportunities, challenges, and the necessary steps in achieving a more inclusive and sustainable healthcare system in the Philippines.



HTA Council Chairperson Dr. Marita Tolentino-Reyes and HTA Division Chief Ms. Anne Julienne Marfori and other participants during the US-ASEAN Business Council Health Dialogues: Innovation for Health held at the Marco Polo Ortigas, Pasig City.

LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

- **Joint Prioritization Meeting with the DOH Disease Prevention and Control Bureau (DPCB) and PhilHealth**

As part of a series of meetings from 2022 to 2023, the HTA Division met with representatives from the DOH Disease Prevention and Control Bureau and PhilHealth on 26 January 2023 via *Zoom* to discuss the DOH-proposed joint HTA Topic Prioritization Process. Discussions on the roles and responsibilities of each office were tackled, as well as necessary preparations for the opening of the 2023 topic nominations were deliberated. For 2023, the resolution was for the HTA Council to remain the process owner, and consult DOH-PhilHealth for needed data.

- **Joint Dialogue with Pharmaceutical and Health Association of the Philippines (PHAP) on the HTA Topic Nomination and Topic Prioritization Plans and the HTA Transition to DOST**

The HTA Philippines organized the Dialogue with PHAP on the 2023 HTA Topic Nomination and Topic Prioritization Plans and the HTA Transition to DOST in response to their request. The dialogue was held on 27 April 2023 via *Zoom* Teleconference which aims to: 1) discuss the plans and provide status updates for the 2023 HTA topic nomination and prioritization; and 2) provide general updates on the HTA transition to the DOST with respect to the implementation of HTA, assessments, potential changes in the normative guidelines.

- **HTA Research Network (RN): Research Proponent Engagement Forum**

The HTA Research Proponent Engagement Forum was held on 11 May 2023 via *Zoom* Teleconference. This event aimed to 1) present the general direction in increasing HTA engagement with researchers and academia; 2) present the current

HTA research agenda and invite research partners to participate. Participating groups include the following:

- Ateneo School of Medicine and Public Health (ASMPH) San Beda College of Medicine
- Ateneo de Manila University Batangas State University
- De La Salle University Health Sciences Institute, (Institute of Biomedical Engineering and Health Technologies (IBEHT), DLSU Manila and DLSU Dasmaringas
- University of Santo Tomas
- St. Luke's Medical Center
- Benguet State University
- Philippine Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology Hepatology and Nutrition
- San Beda College of Medicine
- Batangas State University
- University of the Philippines Manila, National Institutes of Health, Philippine General Hospital (UP-PGH), & Los Baños College of Development Communication
- University of the East Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Medical Center, Inc.
- Nutrition Center of the Philippines
- West Visayas State University Medical Center
- Manila Doctors Hospital
- Asia Pacific Center for Evidence-Based Healthcare
- Department of Science and Technology -Food and Nutrition Research Institute (DOST-FNRI)
- Health Perspectives, Inc.
- Southern Philippines Medical Center
- San Juan De Dios Hospital
- Metro Davao Medical and Research Center
- MetaHealth Insights and Innovations Inc.
- City Government of Valenzuela
- Alliance for Improving Health Outcomes
- Mariano Marcos State University
- Amang Rodriguez Memorial Medical Center
- Sacred Heart Cancer Institute
- Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
- Polytechnic University of the Philippines
- Banko Sentral ng Pilipinas -Health and Wellness Department
- Chinese General Hospital
- Department of Health
- 101 Health Research
- New Era General Hospital
- St. Anthony Mother and Child Hospital
- Wellspring High School, Inc.
- St. Anthony's College - Antique
- Notre Dame of Surala Inc.
- San Isidro High School
- City Government of San Fernando Pampanga
- Innovations for Community Health
- Mariveles Mental Wellness and General Hospital
- Manila Central University – Filemon D. Tanchoco Medical Foundation
- Quezon Medical Center
- Healthcare Practice and Policy Management Inc
- 1Click Management Consultancy Services

- China Harbour
- MNLSYS
- Teresa Rural Health Unit

- **Consultation on the Draft 2023 HTA Topic Nomination and Topic Prioritization Guidelines**

Upon release of the 2023 Draft Topic Nomination and Prioritization Guidelines for stakeholder comments from 01-15 August 2024, the HTA Philippines hosted a separate consultation with the Philippine Alliance of Patients' Organizations (PAPO) and its network of patient groups to the *Consultation on the DRAFT HTA Topic Nomination and Topic Prioritization Guidelines* held on 17 August 2023 via Zoom Teleconference. The consultation meeting aimed to provide a thorough orientation on the HTA process and explain where patient groups may be involved and to gather feedback on the draft Topic Nomination and Topic Prioritization Guidelines.

Participating groups include the following:

- Kythe Foundation Inc
- KITAP (Kidney Transplant Association of the Philippines)
- PSOD (Philippine Society for Orphan Disorders, Inc)
- Rainbow Camp Foundation Philippines Inc.
- MDAP (Muscular Dystrophy Association of the Philippines)
- Dialysis PH
- Neurofibromatosis Friends Philippines
- YWSP (Yellow Warriors Society Philippines)
- Scoliosis Ph
- HAPLOS (Hemophilia Philippines)
- YMHC (Youth for Mental Health Coalition)
- Myelofibrosis Awareness & Support Philippines
- Rare Cancer Philippines
- Philippine General Hospital (PGH) Cancer Survivors Organization
- I Can Serve Foundation Inc.
- ASAPPh
- Cancer-Ex
- Phyltycas
- PhilPOPI (Philippine Patient Organization for Primary Immunodeficiencies)
- Medicines Transparency Alliance (MeTA) Philippines
- Physicians for Peace
- Binan City PWD Federation
- Citizen Watch Philippines
- Touched by Max
- New Vois Association of the Philippines

- **2023 HTA Topic Nomination and Topic Prioritization Guidelines Dissemination Forum and Celebration of the 2023 World Patient Safety Day**

The HTA Philippines continues to seek a strengthened collaboration with patient groups and CSOs to further the HTA agenda. Together with the PAPO, HTA network of patient groups and other CSOs, the HTA Philippines supported back-to-back events—the 2023 HTA Topic Nomination and Topic Prioritization Guidelines Dissemination Forum and Celebration of the 2023 World Patient Safety Day held on 22 September 2023. The HTA Philippines also facilitated a workshop on filling out HTA Topic Nomination Forms for patient groups, CSOs, and the general public during the dissemination forum for the HTA nomination and prioritization. The

Department of Health was also present during the celebration of the 2023 World Patient Safety Day to show its support to patient groups.



Representatives of the HTA Council, HTA Division, DOH, PAPO, other patient groups and CSOs during the 2023 HTA Topic Nomination and Topic Prioritization Guidelines Dissemination Forum and Celebration of the 2023 World Patient Safety Day at the La Breza Hotel, Quezon City

- **St. Luke's Health Equity and Research Foundation**

The HTA Philippines joined the inauguration of the St. Luke's Medical Center (SLMC) Health Equity and Research Foundation (HERE) on 16 November 2023. The event is aimed at connecting and inspiring partners to champion research in health equity.

The SLMC HERE Foundation is a non-stock, not-for-profit research foundation. Its mission is to fund and support translational research designed to measure, understand and mitigate inequities in health and health care. It will fund research projects, support capacity building and advocate for related policies.



Members of the HTA Council and representatives from the HTA Division during the inauguration of the SLMC HERE Foundation at the Shangri La The Fort, Taguig City.

Following the inauguration of the SLMC HERE Foundation, the HTA Philippines and the SLMC HERE Foundation shall sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This MOU aimed to state the intentions of collaboration in research and development, capacity building, and advocacy on health equity between the two parties. The scope of collaboration includes the research funding arrangements and counterpart support; promotion of research areas of mutual interest; facilitation of training support in the area of interest; and cooperative symposia, seminars, workshops, and conferences.

MEETINGS, WORKSHOPS, SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES ORGANIZED AND ATTENDED BY HTA PHILIPPINES

MEETINGS

A. Hosted by HTA Division

➤ Internal

- HTA Council Meetings [19]
- Subcommittee [SC] Meetings [5]
 - SC on Clinical Equipment and Devices (CED) [1]
 - Methods Guide for CED
 - SC on Medical and Surgical Procedures (MSP) [3]
 - Ongoing assessment of Direct Oral Anticoagulants (DOACs) (i.e., apixaban, dabigatran, and rivaroxaban) for non-valvular atrial fibrillation (NVAf) and Cerebrolysin for the treatment of patients post-ischemic stroke [2]
 - Ongoing assessment of Cerebrolysin for the treatment of patients post-ischemic stroke

- SC on Other Health Technologies (OHT)
 - Ongoing Assessment of Dapagliflozin for Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus
- Transitory Formulary Executive Council (TFEC) Meeting [1]
 - Pertuzumab as an add-on to trastuzumab and standard chemotherapy for the treatment of early-stage (i.e., in the neoadjuvant and adjuvant settings) and metastatic human epidermal growth factor receptor 2-positive (HER2+) breast cancer
- Joint SC Meetings [19]
 - Joint Subcommittee on COVID Vaccines (Vaccines and Preventive and Promotive Health [PPH]) [10]
 - COVID-19 Vaccines [5]
 - 2nd booster of COVID-19 vaccines in the healthy population aged 18 to 49 years
 - Bivalent 2nd booster vaccines for the general population aged 18 to 59 years old
 - Primary vaccination in the pediatric population 6 months to < 5 years old and assessment of booster vaccination using Pfizer bivalent of COVID-19 vaccine [WT+BA.4/5] [2]
 - Booster vaccination using bivalent Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine [WT+BA.4/5]
 - Non-COVID-19 Vaccines [5]
 - Rotavirus vaccination in children less than 1 year of age [4]
 - Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine (PCV) Assessment (with external assessment group [EAG])
 - Joint Subcommittee on Procedures (Medical and Surgical Procedures [MSP], Clinical Equipment and Devices [CED] and Preventive and Promotive Health [PPH]) [9]
 - RQ finalization of screening procedure assessment topics and Assessment on Newborn Pulse Oximetry (Part 1)
 - Assessment on Newborn Pulse Oximetry (Part 2)
 - Assessment on Visual Inspection with acetic acid (VIA) for the early detection of Cervical Cancer for women ages 30 to 65 years old
 - Assessment of mammography for the screening of breast cancer in asymptomatic women ages 40 to 69 years old [2]
 - Assessment on Fecal immunohistochemical test and guaiac-based fecal occult blood test (FIT and gFOBT) for the screening of asymptomatic, apparently healthy adults age 45 years old and above
 - Assessment on Ultrasound with Alpha-Fetoprotein (AFP) Test for the screening of adults at risk to develop HCC who have or have not progressed to cirrhosis [2]
 - Assessment of FIT and gFOBT and Colonoscopy
- Technical Working Group Meetings (4)
 - Issues Identified in the Revised 2023 Prioritization Criteria (PC) Tool, Topic Nomination, and New Process Steps
 - Prioritization Criteria Issues, HTA Algorithm, and Additional HTA Steps
 - Sensitivity Analysis of the Revised Prioritization Criteria Tool
 - Finalization of the 2023 Topic Nomination and Prioritization Guidelines and Forms for Public Consultation
- Task Force Meeting (1)
 - Joint Task Force Meeting on Methods Guide and Process Guide

- Consultation Meetings (3)
 - Preparatory Call for the Meeting with Proponents from De La Salle University (DLSU) and Asian Hospital for HTA Research Agenda
 - Conduct of PCV ELSHI Assessment
 - Proposed accelerated PNF (aPNF) inclusion process
- Workshop [1]
 - Revision of the Health Technology Assessment (HTA) Implementing Guidelines
- **External**
 - Meetings with Department of Science and Technology (DOST) [5]
 - DOST Transition Team Visit to the HTA Division office in the Philippine Blood Center, Quezon City
 - 2023 HTA Council Reconstitution Meeting with DOST
 - DOST HTA Council Selection Committee Meeting [2]
 - HTA Council x DOST Preparatory Call for the Joint PHAP Dialogue
 - Meetings with Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) [3]
 - Renal Replacement Therapy (RRT) assessment [3]
 - Courtesy Call of the HTA Council and DOH HTA Division with the FDA
 - ASEAN HTA Harmonization Project Updates
 - Alignment Meeting with DOH DPCB, PhilHealth, DOH - PD/Health Regulation Team (HRT), and DOST on 2023 Topic Nomination and Prioritization
 - HTA Meeting with Proponents from DLSU and Asian Hospital for HTA Research Agenda
 - Meeting with UNIVAC (universal vaccine decision support model) Developers and University of the Philippines - National Institutes of Health (NIH), Institute of Child Health and Human Development on the Vaccine Effectiveness model for Rotavirus Vaccination
 - PCV External Assessment Group Meeting with the DOST - Philippine Council for Health Research and Development (PCHRD) and UP NIH
 - Consultation with Patient Group Representatives on the Draft 2023 HTA Topic Nomination and Topic Prioritization Guidelines
 - 2023 HTA Topic Nomination and Topic Prioritization Guidelines Dissemination Forum and Celebration of the 2023 World Patient Safety Day
 - Workshop
 - Seminar Workshop on the Philippine HTA Methods Guide for CED and Model Calibration Using Real World Data

B. Organized by DOH

- 1st Meeting with Philippine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Technical Working Group for Health Evidence
- Follow up meeting with the CDC TWG for Health Evidence
- DPCB's first Annual Evidence Summit

C. Organized by DOST

- National Unified Health Research Agenda (NUHRA) 2023-2028 Validation Meeting
- National Academy of Science and Technology (NAST) Roundtable Discussion on Drug Discovery and Development in the Philippines

D. HTA lectures Requested by Other Stakeholders

- Lecture on the inclusion of medicines in the PNF to healthcare professionals at the National Children's Hospital's celebration of Generics Awareness Month (11 October 2023)

- Philippine Association of Pharmacists in the Pharmaceutical Industry (PAPPI) 3rd Philippine Pharmaceutical Regulatory Affairs Summit (PPRAS) with the theme: “Regulatory Strengthening, Convergence & Innovation Towards Digital Health” (28 September 2023)
- Lecture on Pharmacy Strengthening Health System: HTA and the Philippine National Formulary (PNF) System of the Veterans Memorial Medical Center Pharmacy Service World Pharmacists Day Celebration (21 September 2023)
- Lecture on the inclusion of medicines in the Philippine National Formulary (PNF) among Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committees (PTCs) in 17 local government units (LGUs) (06 September 2023)
- Centro Escolar University (CEU) Junior Philippine Pharmacists Association (JJPhA) Pharmacy Lecture Series 2023 with the theme: “Rx-plore Possibilities: Escolarian Student Pharmacists Advocating for Universal Health Care” (26 August 2023)
- UP Manila College of Medicine Webinar: Lecture on HTA (09 August 2023)
- Philippine Pharmacists Association (PPhA) 2023 Philippine Pharmacists Association National Convention with the theme: “Transformational Pharmacy Practice for Sustainable Healthcare” (26 May 2023)
- Philippine Society of Hospital Pharmacists (PSHP) 61st Anniversary Celebration and National Convention with the theme: “PSHP Upholding the Culture of Excellence: Aim HIGH for Better Health Systems” (25 February 2023)
- UP College of Pharmacy Lecture on HTA
- Ateneo School of Governance - Masters in Public Management Program Lecture Series on HTA

WORKSHOP

- **Workshop on the Revision of the HTA Implementing Guidelines and the 2nd edition of the HTA Process and Methods Guides (27-29 September 2023)**

The HTA Philippines held a workshop on the revision of the HTA Implementing Guidelines and the second edition of the HTA Process and Methods Guides on September 27 to 29, 2023, in the Quest Hotel, Tagaytay City, as part of the regular updating of the HTA process and methods based on real experiences and global HTA practices.



The HTA Council with the HTA Division during the Workshop on the Revision of the HTA Implementing Guidelines and the 2nd edition of the HTA Process and Methods Guides 2023 held at the Quest Hotel, Tagaytay City

- **HTA Division Strategic and Operational Planning Workshop for 2024 (5-7 December 2023)**

The HTA Division conducted the Strategic and Operational Planning Workshop for 2024 from 5-7 December 2023 at Quest Hotel, Clark City, Pampanga. This workshop aimed to take stock of the 2023 HTA Implementation by reviewing the 2023 program implementation, and informing the development of the 2024 HTA Division Line Item Budget and the 2024 HTA Operational Plan.



The HTA Division during the Strategic and Operational Planning Workshop for 2024 held at Quest Hotel, Clark City, Pampanga

EXTERNAL WORKSHOPS

- **UP Manila College of Medicine HTA Workshop: An Introduction to Health Technology Assessment in the Philippines (12-13 and 19-20 January 2023)**

This event facilitated by the HTA Philippines was organized by the UP Manila College of Medicine and DOST PCHRD. Sessions include the 1) historical growth and development of HTA in the Philippines; 2) HTA: Definition and Key Principles; 3) an overview of how the HTA Council works; 4) domains and relevant methods in HTA; and 5) workshop on evidence-based, policy decision-making.

- **Facing the Media Workshop and Seminar (22-25 February 2023)**

Ms. Sheena Jasley Samonte of the HTA Division - Technical Secretariat Unit attended the *Facing the Media Workshop and Seminar* held in Bataan on 22-25 February 2023 together with other DOH officials, personnel, and staff. The DOH Communication Office spearheaded the event which aims to capacitate staff and personnel who represent the Department in media and speaking engagements. This is highly relevant and timely as the HTA Council endeavors to identify spokespersons needing the HTA Council's position per issue.

- **Workshop on Vaccinology for Clinical and Public Health Practice (15-18 May 2023)**

Ms. Sarah May Obmaña, Senior Health Program Officer, Policy, Planning and Evaluation Unit, HTA Division, attended a vaccination course in Bandung, Indonesia on 15-18 May 2023, which was hosted by Universitas Padjajaran (UNPAD). The course, entitled "Vaccinology for Clinical and Public Health Practice," was jointly organized by the National University of Singapore (NUS), the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM), the Access and Delivery Partnership (ADP), and the Health Intervention and Technology Assessment Program (HITAP) Thailand. The primary goal of the course was to increase the technical capacity of stakeholders in the field of vaccination by improving the following:

- Scientific and technical knowledge in vaccinology, including immunology, epidemiology, modelling, health economics, and behavioral science related to vaccines.
- Recognition of the role of health technology assessment (HTA) in optimizing scarce resources for vaccines
- Understanding the political and economic issues in vaccine policy at the national, regional, and global levels
- Learning from partners and identifying means for collaboration to further vaccine policy at the national regional and global levels
- Applying lessons to the COVID-19 pandemic and pandemic preparedness in the future.

The course consists of a one-day policy conference and a three-day workshop covering several vaccine-related topics. The majority of participants came from Indonesia, while there were also others from the Asia Pacific area. The HTA Division is still taking part in initiatives to increase capacity so that it can better serve its stakeholders.



Ms. Sarah May Obmaña, Senior Health Program Officer, Policy, Planning and Evaluation Unit, HTA Division, along with representatives from the National University of Singapore (NUS), the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM), the Access and Delivery Partnership (ADP), and the Health Intervention and Technology Assessment Program (HITAP) Thailand during the Workshop on Vaccinology for Clinical and Public Health Practice held at the Universitas Padjajaran (UNPAD) at Bandung, Indonesia

- **Workshop on Infectious Illness Modeling (22-25 August 2023)**

From 22-25 August 2023, the HTA Division and HTA Council attended the workshop on infectious illness modeling. The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM), National University of Singapore (NUS), and the Institute of Health Policy and Development Studies, National Institutes of Health (NIH-IHPDS) at the University of the Philippines Manila (UPM) co-organized the workshop. Renowned authorities on infectious disease modeling, Professors Mark Jit and Kiesha Prem served as the workshop's main lecturers. On the second day of the workshop, the HTA Division, headed by Chief Ms. Anne Julienne Marfori, and the HTA Council, represented by Health Economist Dr. Aleli Kraft of the HTA Council Core Committee, had a courtesy meeting to discuss possible future areas of collaboration.

Attendees of the HTA Division will share what they have learned in the workshop with the remaining members of the HTA Division technical staff. The HTA Division is still taking part in initiatives to increase capacity so that it can better serve its stakeholders.



Representatives from the HTA Council, HTA Division, The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM), National University of Singapore (NUS), and the Institute of Health Policy and Development Studies, National Institutes of Health (NIH-IHPDS) at the University of the Philippines – Manila (UP Manila) during the Workshop on Infectious Illness Modeling held at the UP-Manila.

- **Mapping the Pharmaceutical System: A Community Model-Building Workshop** (08 September 2024)

The HTA Division attended the *Mapping the Pharmaceutical System: A Community Model-Building Workshop* organized by the DOH-PD and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) on 08 September 2023. The workshop aims to gather information from the different stakeholders in the pharmaceutical sector and other government agencies to create a shared understanding of the issues of medicines access, analyze government interventions, identify gaps, and prioritize strategies to improve the critical components of the pharmaceutical system.



Mr. Patrick Wincy Reyes from the HTA Division and other participants during the Mapping the Pharmaceutical System: A Community Model-Building Workshop held at ADB Conference Room, 6 ADB Avenue, Mandaluyong City

- **Strategic planning and indicators for monitoring and evaluation workshop (3-6 October 2023)**

The National Integrated Cancer Control Council (NICCC) held its "Strategic planning and indicators for monitoring and evaluation workshop" from October 3-6, 2023, at the Novotel Manila, Araneta City. The HTA Division's PPE Unit was actively present in the said workshop. This workshop aims to: (1) reflect on the insights and review the essential outputs of the Reorientation or Current Reality and Systems Thinking workshop; (2) learn scenario building and environmental scanning using the SOAR Model; (3) develop the strategy map and balanced scorecards; and (4) identify the next steps to complete the strategy map and scorecards.

The representative of the HTA Division was able to offer feedback on the NICCC's 2024–2028 Strategy Map and share the division's observations regarding some of the NICCC's suggested pathways for adding cancer medications to the PNF. During the HTA Council Meeting on 18 October 2023, Ms. Salazar had the opportunity to report to the Council on the topics discussed in the aforementioned workshop.

The DOST HTA Division and the DOH will maintain a proactive collaboration as they work toward universal health care.



Ms. Lyka Rica Salazar and other participants during the Strategic Planning and Indicators for Monitoring and Evaluation Workshop held at the Novotel Manila, Quezon City

- **Seminar Workshop on Philippine Health Technology Assessment (HTA) (29-30 November 2023)**

The HTA Philippines in collaboration with USAID Medicines, Technologies, and Pharmaceutical Services (MTaPS) conducted the Seminar-Workshop on Philippine HTA Methods Guide for Clinical Equipment and Devices (CED) and Model Calibration Using Real World Data on November 28–30, 2023 held at Dusit Thani Manila, Makati City. The workshop's goals are as follows: (1) to share HTA country experiences between Indonesia and the Philippines, (2) to discuss the key principles in conducting HTA for clinical equipment and devices, (3) to discuss the methodology guidelines for clinical equipment and devices, (4) to share the application of real-world registry data in developing decision models for economic evaluation, and (5) to conduct a practical workshop session on the use of real-world evidence for economic evaluations. Colleagues from Indonesia attended the event, fostering a cooperative atmosphere for the sharing of knowledge and experiences. On the first day of the event, HTA Philippines' technical support providers and colleagues from Indonesia were welcomed by DOST Undersecretary for Scientific and Technical Services Maridon O. Sahagun. The workshop proved to be efficacious as it furnished a forum for acquiring knowledge on HTA of CEDs, sharing insights with Indonesia regarding how HTA Philippines was able to optimize its operations from the national formulary office, and investigating the utilization of real-world data in the creation of decision models. The HTA Division is still taking part in initiatives to increase capacity so that it can better serve its stakeholders.



DOST Undersecretary for Scientific and Technical Services Maridon O. Sahagun, representatives from the HTA Council, the HTA Division, the USAID Medicines, Technologies, and Pharmaceutical Services (MTaPS), and the Indonesian Ministry of Health (MOH) during the Seminar Workshop on Philippine Health Technology Assessment (HTA) Methods Guide for CED and Model Calibration Using Real World Data held at Dusit Thani Manila, Makati City

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

- **Health Technology Assessment International (HTAi)'s 2023 Annual Meeting and Conference (24-28 June 2023)**

Participating in the HTAi 2023 Annual Meeting and Conference in Adelaide, Australia, from 24-28 June 2023, were the HTA Philippines, represented by Mr. Patrick Wincy Reyes, Head of the HTA Division Policy Planning and Evaluation Unit, and Ms. Sheena Jasley Samonte, Head of the Technical Secretariat Unit.

This year's conference theme is "The Road to Policy and Clinical Integration," and one of its objectives was to discuss the difficulties involved in bringing processes in a standardized framework for evaluating health innovations into harmony.

The HTAi awarded participation grants to Mr. Reyes and Ms. Samonte, enabling them to give oral presentations on the following subjects:

1. Streamlining the Health Technology Assessment Process of Medical Devices through the Development of the Philippine Essential Medical Device List*
2. Adoption of the WHO Algorithm for Essential Medicines in the Philippine National Formulary Listing Process**
3. Pilot Implementation of the HTA Topic Prioritization in the Philippines: Lessons and Moving Forward Plans**

Both representatives also attended assessments- and process-relevant workshops and conference sessions they handpicked which proved relevant and useful in the internal capacity-building of the HTA Philippines. As an immediate follow-through, both team leads conducted a knowledge-sharing session with the HTA Division on

27 July 2023, and are committed to working on post-annual meeting collaboration with the HTAi for initiatives stemming from the workshops.

Mr. Reyes and Ms. Samonte were granted permission to participate in the "International Collaboration Roundtable," which was organized by the Australian Government's Department of Health and Aged Care, on behalf of their HTA agency. The roundtable's main objectives were to provide updates on the Australian government's evaluation of its HTA policies and procedures in Australia and to foster stronger ties between government agencies that support health technology and/or deal with HTA. During the session titled "Legal structure for establishing an HTA organization: Low- and middle-income countries' perspective," Ms. Samonte participated as a panelist and discussed with the other participants the experiences of the Philippines in institutionalizing HTA.

HTA Philippines' attendance at the HTAi annual meeting is appropriate and timely given that the organization is currently improving its procedures and techniques. HTA Philippines is grateful to the Department of Science and Technology and HTAi for their assistance in enhancing its capability so that it can better serve its stakeholders.



Delegates representing Philippine industry, patient organizations, hospitals, and HTA agencies (Singapore Agency for Care Effectiveness and HTA Philippines) during the Health Technology Assessment International (HTAi)'s 2023 Annual Meeting and Conference held in Adelaide, Australia

- **11th HTAsialink Conference (04-07 September 2023)**

From 04-07 September 2023, the HTA Division Malaysia delegation attended the 11th HTAsialink Conference in Putrajaya, Malaysia.

The HTA Division took part in the HTAsiaLink Board activities, oral and poster presentations, and a pre-conference workshop. Specific activities per photo were detailed in our publicity:

<https://www.facebook.com/htaphilippines/posts/371102782133252>

The representatives of the HTA Division echoed what they have learned with the other members of the technical staff and will persistently engage in capacity-building exercises that will enhance their ability to serve stakeholders.



Delegates from the HTA Division and the Malaysian HTA Section (MaHTAS), among others, during the 11th HTAsiaLink Conference held in Putrajaya, Malaysia

- **Federation of Asian Pharmacists Association (FAPA) Congress 2023** (24-28 October 2023)

The HTA Division was present at the Federation of Asian Pharmacists Association (FAPA) Congress in Taipei, Taiwan, from 24-28 October 2023 via Ms. Princess Allyza B. Mondala, Senior Health Program Officer of the PPE Unit. Her topic for presentation was "Assessment of Rotavirus Vaccination in Filipino children less than 1 year of age."

The five-day event, themed "Health Systems Resilience, Security, and Equity: Pharmacists Can Help," was jam-packed with sessions covering a wide range of topics, including AI-assisted precision healthcare, the use of herbal Chinese medicine in the treatment of hyperlipidemia, the evolution of drug regulatory management in Taiwan and Australia, the roles that pharmacists play in the prevention and control of pandemics, the development of the pharmaceutical workforce, big data and AI applications, and evidence-based pharmaceutical policies, among many other topics.

- **Health Technology Assessment International (HTAi) 2023 Asia Policy Forum**
(01-03 November 2023)

With the theme "Being Bold – How HTA Can Foster Innovation in The Asia Region," the HTA Philippines was represented at the Health Technology Assessment International (HTAi) 2023 Asia Policy Forum, which was held in Taipei, Taiwan, from 01-03 November 2023 by Dr. Lizette Kristine Lopez, Chairperson of the HTA Council Subcommittee on Drugs and Ms. Anne Julienne Marfori, Chief of the HTA Division.

The conference highlighted the importance of defining what innovation means and that it may vary based on perspectives. One important takeaway question from the conference is *should the global HTA community define a universal concept of what qualifies (and what does not) as innovation? Or should it accept that every context is different?*

2023 GAPS AND CHALLENGES

Technical Challenges

- Lack of HTA practitioners in the country
- Lack of local input data needed in conducting HTAs
- Lack of technology-specific methodologies for non-drug, non-vaccine HTs under the purview of HTA Council
- Ineffective strategies for HTA awareness/appreciation among all stakeholder
- Unclear delineation of roles between the HTA Division and the National Formulary office on the application of PNF-listing to procurement-related concerns
- Inadequate orientation of external assessors on the process and methodological requirements of HTA Philippines

Operational and Process Challenges

- Extra demand on logistics to sustain HTA while transitioning to DOST
- Lack of efficient mechanisms for external commissioning
- Difficulty in adhering to the ideal process timelines
 - process requires involvement of individuals and organizations external to HTA Philippines
 - uncontrollable challenges in the bureaucratic processes
 - ongoing transition
 - retention of HR
- Limited budget for operations as almost half is earmarked for research and assessment projects
- Lack of formal process to measure impact of HTA on UHC implementation/ Public health programs/ PhilHealth Benefits

WAYS FORWARD

Increasing HTA Capacity

- Institutionalizing the Philippine HTA Agency (115-plantilla agency)
- Establishing the HTA Research Network
 - Efficient commissioning process
 - Implementing HTA training programs for external assessors
- Developing and implementing the local HTA postgraduate program
- Identifying and supporting needed learning and development intervention among HTA Council and HTA Division staff
- Establishing data libraries
- Introducing HTA to students and early career professionals
- Partnering with international experts for capacity building (USAID MTAPS, WHO, UK Embassy, ASEAN)

Stakeholder Engagement

- Improving the production of HTA communication materials
- Boosting engagement activities with stakeholders; additional communication channels
- Conducting more dissemination activities
- Strengthening participation of patients and public in the HTA process

Efficiency in processes

- Process and Methods Guides revisions (benchmarking with other countries)
- Piloting several mechanisms for external commissioning

Measuring Impact

- Establishing the HTA M&E framework

2023 HTA DIVISION BUDGET

- The HTA Division initially proposed a budget of Php 70.323 M for CY 2023 when it was still in DOH in 2022. However, the 2023 DBM-approved National Expenditure Program (NEP) only amounted to Php 37.547 M. The Php 30M funds for the HTA Research were not included. The 2023 Approved NEP (37.547M) of the HTA is 13.51% higher than its 2022 General Appropriations Act (GAA) budget (33.077M).
- The HTA Division appealed to the Congress/Senate the additional funds of Php 30M to allocate budget for the Senate with Special Provision to directly allocate to the DOST to avoid the lengthy process of procurement in the DOH. However, this was still not included in the approved General Appropriations Bill (GAB).
- The HTA Division again appealed through the BICAM Committee in November 2022 for the additional Php 30M for HTA Research as well as the special provision to transfer the GAB-approved Php 37.547M 2023 budget of HTA Division in order to initiate the transfer of HTA operations from DOH to DOST as mandated by the Universal Health Care Act.
- As of December 2022, the GAA 2023 approved budget for HTA Division was still PHP 37.547M excluding the Php30M budget for the HTA Research and requested Special Provisions.
- Following the transfer of the HTA Division's *plantilla* positions in January 2023 from the DOH to DOST, the 2023 GAA funds of the HTA Division, amounting to PHP 37.547 M, was directly released to the DOST pursuant to the National Budget Circular No. 590 dated 03 January 2023.

2024 HTA DIVISION BUDGET

- The HTA Division initially proposed a budget of PHP 37.547M for Tier 1 and an additional PHP 43.564M for Tier 2, totaling Php 81.111 M for CY 2024. However, the 2024 DBM-approved NEP only amounted to Php 37.547 M (Tier 1), excluding the additional PHP 43.564M (Tier 2). The 2023 approved NEP (37.547M) of the HTA remains the same at PHP 37.547 M, consistent with its 2023 GAA level.
- Under the DOST at present, the HTA Division could no longer directly appeal for additional funds and no longer seek the approval of the requested additional funds through Congress/Senate.
- As of December 2023, the GAA 2024 approved budget for HTA Division is still PHP 37.547M.

2023 BUDGET	2024 BUDGET
HTA Division-Proposed Budget: ₱ 70.323M	HTA Division-Proposed Budget: ₱ 81.111M
NEP-Approved 2023 Budget: ₱ 37.547M <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DBM-approved Tier 1: ₱ 30.323M • Tier 2: Additional ₱ 7.224M [for HTA Council Salaries]. DBM lodged this under PS (should be under MOOE; appealed through Congress/Senate to re-allocate) • ₱ 30M budget for HTA Research with Special Provision to directly allocate to DOST was not included in the NEP-approved budget 	NEP-Approved 2023 Budget: ₱ 37.547M <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DBM-approved Tier 1: ₱ 37.547M • Tier 2: Additional PHP 43.564 M funds for additional HTA Research projects for 2024, salaries for additional COS staff and, other operating expenses were not included in the NEP-approved budget

<p>GAB-approved 2023 Budget: ₱ 37.547M</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ₱ 7.224M under PS was already re-allocated as MOOE to accommodate the honorarium of non-plantilla members of the HTA council. The new item from PS to MOOE is “Other Professional Services” • ₱ 30M budget for HTA Research with Special Provision to directly allocated to DOST was not included in the GAB-approved budget 	
<p>GAA-Approved 2023 Budget: ₱ 37.547M</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not include the HTA Division's request for Special Provision for the direct transfer of its 2023 budget to DOST in order to initiate the transfer of HTA operations from DOH to DOST as mandated by the Universal Health Care Act • ₱ 30M budget for HTA Research with Special Provision to directly allocate to DOST was not included in the GAA-approved budget 	<p>GAA-Approved 2024 Budget: ₱ 37.547M</p> <p>Additional PHP 43.564 M funds for additional HTA Research projects for 2024, salaries for additional COS staff and, other operating expenses were not included in the GAA-approved budget</p>

2024 GOALS AND WORK STREAMS

WS1: HTA GOVERNANCE: PROCESS AND METHODS

1.1 Administrative Order, Process Guide and Methods Guide (AO-PG-MG) (2nd edition)

As the HTA Philippines has been working on the revisions in the HTA implementing guidelines and its annexes, after the stakeholder consultation/ feedback that was facilitated toward the end of the year (18 December 2023 to 04 January 2024), the HTA Philippines endeavors to finalize and disseminate the revised AO-PG-MG throughout 2024. Prior to the zonal dissemination of the 2nd edition of the AO-PG-MG, the HTA Philippines will facilitate the official release and online launching of the Guides. The zonal dissemination aims to cover various stakeholder groups including DOH, PhilHealth, medical societies, hospitals, academic and scientific organizations, patient groups and CSOs, and marketing authorization holders from August to November 2024.

1.2 Stakeholder Engagement (SHE) Framework

Together with the AO-PG-MG, the SHE Framework will also be finalized and disseminated during the same timelines.

1.3 2023 HTA Philippines Accomplishment Report (AR)

Within the first two quarters of 2024, the HTA Philippines aims to share with its stakeholders the accomplishments and challenges for 2023 as well as the moving forward plans for 2024.

1.4 2024 Budget Preparation and LIB development

Based on the planned work streams for 2024, the itemization and allocation of budget is also done by the HTA Division. The approved LIB for 2024 is expected to be available by January 2024.

WS2: 2023 GENERAL TRACK IMPLEMENTATION (FOR CYCLE 2 PRIORITIZED TOPICS)

2.1 Topic Prioritization

From the second week of November 2023 until the third week of January 2024, the HTA Division aims to score the nominated topics in 2023. By February to the first week of March of 2024, the HTA Council subcommittee-level scoring shall be done through meetings. The 2024 HTA Topic Prioritization Workshop is set for the second week of March 2024. The Provisional List of Priority HTA Topics is aimed to be released in the first week of April 2024 and will be subjected to stakeholder consultation. The submission of appeals shall be from the first to third week of April 2024. The Final List of Priority HTA Topics is aimed to be released in the third week of May 2024. Per previous experience, these timelines may move depending on contentious issues and anticipated requests of stakeholders to extend deadlines for consultations.

2.2 Topic Allocation

Upon completion of the HTA Topic Priority List, it is aimed to open the call for expression of interest to assess the prioritized topics. Acceptance and review of capsule proposals from EAGs were scheduled from the fifth week of May 2024 until the third week of June 2024, while the development and approval of full proposal of EAGs was from the third week of June 2024 to the end of July 2024. By the first week of August 2024, the final HTA Topic Allocation List for Cycle 2 Topics (from the 2023 HTA Topic Nomination) is aimed to be finalized.

WS3. 2024 GENERAL TRACK OPENING

3.1 Topic Nominations

By the end of March 2024, the HTA Council is set to provide the direction on the third round of General HTA Track nominations. This is still contingent on the ongoing Topic Prioritization for cycle 2 prioritized topics (from the 2023 HTA Topic Nomination).

3.2 Topic Prioritization

This workstream is contingent on the developments above.

WS4. ASSESSMENTS CYCLE

4.1 Internal Assessments

4.1.1. Pre-Cycle 1 Prioritized Topics (TFEC, before the first round of Topic Nominations in 2022)

From May to November 2024, the HTA Council aims to develop the Economic and ELSHI Judgments and finalize the EE and ELSHI Assessment Reports for three (3) TFEC topics that are undergoing clinical assessment by EAG.

4.1.2. Cycle 1 Prioritized Topics (from the 2022 Topic Nominations)

By Q1 2024, the HTA Philippines aims to accomplish the Clinical Assessment Reports for Procedures HTs [e.g., Fecal Immunohistochemical Test (FIT)/Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT), Ultrasound with Alpha Fetoprotein (AFP), Visual Inspection with Acetic Acid (VIA), and Mammography]. For Q2 2024, the HTA Council will develop their recommendation and accomplish reports and evidence summaries for 1-dose Human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine,

Japanese Encephalitis Virus (JEV) vaccine, and Calcium hydroxide + Clinoptilolite Larvicide.

4.1.3. Cycle 2 Prioritized Topics (from the 2023 HTA Topic Nomination)

By October 2024, the HTA Council targets to develop clinical judgments and accomplish the clinical assessment reports for a DOH-nominated vaccine (i.e., nonavalent HPV vaccine) in collaboration with the UK NIHR and one prioritized topic during the 2024 Topic Prioritization.

4.1.4. Minor Inclusions

Throughout 2024, the HTA Philippines aims to continue accepting minor inclusion applications, developing assessment reports and coming up with HTA Council recommendations for topics under the said HTA track.

4.1.5. PEMDL Listing 2024

By August 2024 (pending resolution with the DOH Pharmaceutical Division - Medical Devices Unit), the HTA Philippines aims to facilitate the development of HTA Council recommendation for inclusion of additional batches of medical devices in the PEMDL.

4.2 External Assessments

4.2.1 Pre-cycle 1 (TFEC, before the first round of Topic Nominations in 2022)

The HTA Council intends to finalize the Subcommittees' clinical judgments in 14 topics from Stream 1 and Stream 3 by August 2024. Topic assignments to EAG for the EE + ELSHI assessments based on these clinical assessments as well as MOA signing are expected to be completed by Q4 2024.

4.2.2 Cycle 1 Prioritized Topics (from the 2022 Topic Nominations)

The review and approval of EAG Inception reports is currently ongoing and is expected to be completed by Q1 2024, while the HTA Division aims to assess externally commissioned topics and review EAG assessments by Q2 2024. The HTA Council intends to release the final recommendation for the five (5) EE+ELSHI topics by June to November of the same year. For the 17 topics from Stream 1 and Stream 3, the HTA Council targets to review and approve EAG Inception reports by January 2024.

The appraisal of clinical assessments by the HTA Council Subcommittees will commence from February to August 2024. The HTA Council targets to complete topic assignments to EAG for the Economic and ELSHI assessment by Q3 2024 to 2025. In addition, the review of the inception report/protocol of four major depressive disorder (MDD) drugs from WHO TA and one topic through PhilHealth funding is expected to be accomplished by September 2024 to January 2025.

4.2.3 Cycle 2 Prioritized Topics (from the 2023 HTA Topic Nomination)

From Q2 to Q4 2024, the HTA Philippines intends to facilitate the external commissioning and finalization of research questions for topics that will be prioritized for Cycle 2.

WS5. RESEARCH AGENDA (NON-ASSESSMENT)

5.1 Finalization of Methods Guide (2023 Ongoing Agenda)

To complement the revision of the HTA Methods Guide, there are ongoing developments of Methods Guide for various health technologies (e.g., clinical equipment and devices, preventive and promotive health interventions, acupuncture, and digital health technologies) as well as for special topic areas (e.g., rare disease, real world evidence) since December 2023. The HTA Philippines aims to finalize and release the methods guide for (1) RWE in clinical assessments, (2) rare diseases, (3) OHT by December 2024; and the methods guide for TCIM by January 2025.

5.2. Obligation of funds (2023 Ongoing Agenda)

The obligation of funds for the assessment of Monochromatic Excimer Light (MEL) Device for Psoriasis [Beta testing of MG of CED] and development of methods guide for MSP and PPH will commence in Q1 to Q2 2024. For the Cost Effectiveness Threshold Study and Discount Rate Study, the target timelines for the obligation of funds is by Q3 to Q4 2024.

WS6. RESEARCH NETWORK DEVELOPMENT

6.1. HTA Research Network Development

6.1.1. Final Implementing Guidelines

As part of the goal to establish a research network, the HTA Philippines endeavors to develop a Research Implementing Guidelines which will detail the standards of the commissioning-out process for assessments. The target release and dissemination of the guidelines is by Q3 2024.

6.1.2. Established Pool of Researchers in the Research Network

After the finalization of the HTA RN Implementing Guidelines, the HTA Philippines aims to establish its Pool of Researchers (i.e., Science and Technology [S&T] Fellow, Ethics consortia [model structure]). Invites will be sent out to various academic universities and non-government organizations and proposals will be reviewed by the HTA Council. By Q4 2024, the HTA Philippines targets to conduct a launching event for the HTA Research Network.

6.2. Capacity-building Activities for HTA Research Network

The HTA Philippines plans to conduct capacity-building activities that will help the researchers to have a better grasp of various methodologies and standards used in HTA. By Q3 2024, it is targeted to provide training on HTA Methods Guide (2nd edition) to be followed by a Cost-effectiveness analysis (CEA) Methods through the assistance of the UK National Institute of Health (NIH).

WS7. TRANSITION-RELATED MATTERS

7.1 Creation of HTA Philippines as attached agency

Efforts to establish HTA Philippines as an attached agency to the DOST, five years after its creation as mandated by the UHC act, had begun this year. The Ceremonial Turnover of HTA Operations from the DOH to the DOST was held on 06 March 2023, and the official transfer of HTA Division operations was completed in July 2023. Consultations and alignment with the DOST Office of the Undersecretary for Scientific and Technical Services, the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administrative and Legal Affairs, and the revision of the ongoing request for additional plantilla positions from the Department of Budget and Management has

been carried over, with a target submission to the DBM by the first quarter of 2024. Approval of the additional plantilla positions will officially mark the creation of an independent HTA Philippines as an attached agency to the DOST.

7.2 Creation of physical office

The request for capital outlay for the creation of a physical office will be granted once HTA Philippines has been officially established as an independent agency. The next steps for this goal will be revisited once the independent attached agency is in place.

WS8. INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS

8.1 ASEAN HTA Harmonization Project

With the ASEAN HTA Harmonization Project, the HTA Philippines aims to conduct an online workshop for use of common methodology for clinical assessments and harmonized reporting format by June 2024 and to start joint assessment by October 2024.

8.2 United Kingdom (UK) Embassy Technical Assistance (TA) to the Philippines

The UK Embassy is one of the international partners that aims to provide technical assistance to the HTA Philippines. The scope of the TA and the implementation of the scope of work is expected to be established within the Q2 of 2024 with the help of the National Health Service (NHS) Health Systems Connect. The specific timelines will still depend on international partner timelines (i.e., NHS Consortium).

8.3 UK - National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) Project with the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM)

The UK NIHR in partnership with LSHTM will conduct a capacity building workshop on vaccine assessments with the HTA Philippines. This workshop will include vaccine assessment, modeling, and DCEA. An HTA Awareness Fora for policy-makers and clinicians will also be conducted. These said activities are also integrated in other workstreams. However, the timeline of these activities is still dependent on the approval of the UK-NIH grant to LSHTM.

ANNEXES

ANNEX A. HTA GOVERNANCE IN THE PHILIPPINES AND OTHER PUBLISHED ISSUANCE

Title	Highlights	Link
<p>Republic Act No. 11223</p> <p>An Act Instituting Universal Health Care for All Filipinos, Prescribing Reforms in the Health Care System, and Appropriating Funds Therefor</p>	<p>Formalizes HTA as a priority setting mechanism for all health technologies procured through DOH and PhilHealth funds</p>	<p>https://www.congress.gov.ph/legisdocs/ra_17/RA11223.pdf</p>
<p>Republic Act No. 11223</p> <p>Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Universal Health Care Act</p>	<p>Details key players in the conduct of HTA, and the specific roles of HTA Council in the pursuit of UHC</p>	<p>https://doh.gov.ph/sites/default/files/basic-page/UHC-IRR-signed.pdf</p>
<p>Administrative Order DOH AO No. 2020-0041</p> <p>New Implementing Guidelines on Health Technology Assessment to Guide Funding Allocation and Coverage Decisions in support of Universal Health Care</p>	<p>Sets the HTA governance and operational framework through its annexes, the Process and Methods Guides</p>	<p>AO 2020-0041: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PVmKo7DDz4j0Lr0tOi8hniSg7sT4oN_/view</p> <p>Philippine HTA Process Guide: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yJI8_D5VgKbp8mGkKJUNH39vzbBiVuZf/view</p> <p>Philippine HTA Methods Guide: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yJI8_D5VgKbp8mGkKJUNH39vzbBiVuZf/view</p>
<p>Acceptance of Minor Inclusions in the Philippine National Formulary (PNF) for Health Technology Assessment (HTA) following the PNF System for Drugs</p>	<p>Refines the HTA track for inclusions in the PNF</p>	<p>https://hta.doh.gov.ph/2020/11/18/memo-on-the-acceptance-of-minor-inclusions-in-the-philippine-national-formulary-pnf-for-health-technology-assessment-hta-following-the-pnf-system-for-drugs/</p>
<p>2023 Topic Nomination and Prioritization Guidelines</p>	<p>Provides complete guidance for the 2023 HTA topic nomination and prioritization process</p>	<p>bit.ly/2023NomPrioGuidelines</p>

Call for Nomination of Topics for the HTA Priority List	Announces the start and end date of the HTA Topic Nomination process	https://bit.ly/OpeningTNP2023
Release of the 1st edition of the Health Technology Assessment (HTA) Methods Guide for Clinical Equipment and Devices (CED)	Provides guidance in conducting HTA and its domains in assessing the clinical, economic, ethical, legal, social and health systems implications of a specific to CEDs	bit.ly/IntlCEDMG
Public Consultation on the Draft Revisions to the HTA implementing guidelines (i.e., Administrative Order, Process Guide, Methods Guide, Stakeholder Engagement Framework)	HTA Council issuance for stakeholder involvement	bit.ly/AOMGPGSHEPubCon

ANNEX B. SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENTS

Health Technology	Recommendation	Adopted by DOH or PhilHealth?	Link
Public Health Emergency Topics			
COVID-19 vaccines for pediatric population	Recommended the use of COVID-19 vaccines as boosters for the healthy pediatric population and as 3rd dose for the immunocompromised pediatric population ages 5 to 11 years old.	Yes	Annex only to the Letter of Recommendation to the Secretary of Health
COVID-19 vaccines for immunocompromised population	Recommended the use of COVID-19 vaccines for the immunocompromised population.	Yes	Annex only to the Letter of Recommendation to the Secretary of Health
COVID-19 vaccines as 2nd booster for immunocompromised population	Recommended the use of COVID-19 vaccines as 2nd booster for the immunocompromised population.	Yes	Annex only to the Letter of Recommendation to the Secretary of Health
COVID-19 vaccines as 2nd booster for the general population	Recommended the use of COVID-19 vaccines as 2nd booster for the general population.	Yes	Annex only to the Letter of Recommendation to the Secretary of Health
Bivalent COVID-19 vaccine Moderna [Wild Type + Omicron BA.1]	Recommended the use of bivalent COVID-19 vaccine Moderna [Wild Type + Omicron BA.1] as 1st, 2nd, and/or 3rd booster (i.e., 1st, 2nd, 3rd dose after completing the primary series) for adults belonging to the A1 to A3 population groups (healthcare workers; senior citizens; adults with comorbidities, including those with immunocompromising	Yes	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qalqGjxGdiPiHDumlpz7vaKjH6qoFj91/view

	conditions), 4-6 months after the primary series or the last booster dose)		
Bivalent Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine [Wild Type (WT) + Omicron BA.4/BA.5] (donated supply)	Recommended the roll-out of donated bivalent Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine [Wild Type (WT) + Omicron BA.4/BA.5] as a 1st, 2nd, and/or 3rd booster for adults belonging to the A1 to A3 population groups (healthcare workers; senior citizens; adults with comorbidities, including those with immunocompromising conditions)	Yes	Annex only to the Letter of Recommendation to the Secretary of Health
Pfizer Bivalent COVID-19 Vaccine (limited donated supplies)	At this time, the HTA Council cannot recommend the use of the donated supplies of Pfizer Bivalent (Wild-type + Omicron BA.4/BA.5) COVID-19 Vaccine as 2nd booster for the healthy adult population ages 18 to 59 years old.	Yes	Annex only to the Letter of Recommendation to the Secretary of Health
Philippine National Formulary Topics			
Dapagliflozin	Government financing of dapagliflozin 10 mg single-dose film-coated tablets as an add-on treatment to metformin (MET) for adults with Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (T2DM) who have or are at a higher risk of having cardiovascular disease and/or diabetic nephropathy	Yes	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1t06oTgaKl9lOgt13nbC3uk7k-RXccSN/view
Pertuzumab	Non-government financing of pertuzumab as an add-on to trastuzumab and standard chemotherapy for the treatment of	Yes	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CosM_IQacBPLiEW-KSICZnXscmeVJpLC/view

	early-stage (i.e., in the neoadjuvant and adjuvant settings) and metastatic human epidermal growth factor receptor 2-positive (HER2+) breast		
Apixaban, dabigatran, and rivaroxaban	Government financing of apixaban, dabigatran, and rivaroxaban for the prevention of myocardial infarction, cerebrovascular diseases, and other cardiovascular events among patients with nonvalvular atrial fibrillation (NVAF) patients	Yes	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ts3zVtdJs9f6N3yKS2-RUxM3u-K8XyH/view
Cerebrolysin	Non-financing of cerebrolysin in combination with rehabilitation or standard of care for the treatment of adults post-ischemic stroke	Yes	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1uPWqrGyXBIFPjGlofaNQ3_iN3brK2R0X/view?usp=drive_link
Rotavirus Vaccine	Government financing of rotavirus vaccines for children less than one year of age	Yes	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1QqhrVc1j4Y-nMHvdkT-TiM6Dxqsj-TXX/view
Minor Inclusion Topics			
Human erythropoietin alfa 4000 IU/mL solution or injection (IV/SC) 1mL pre-filled syringe	Recommended for minor inclusion in the PNF	Yes	https://hta.dost.gov.ph/dc-no-2023-0060-health-technology-assessment-council-htac-recommendation-for-the-inclusion-of-recombinant-human-erythropoietin-epoetin-alfa-4000-iu-ml-solution-for-injection-iv-sc-1ml-pre-fill/
Filgrastim 300mcg/0.9mL solution, 0.9 mL	Recommended for minor inclusion in the PNF	Yes	https://hta.dost.gov.ph/department-circular-no-2023-0061-health-technology-assessm

pre-filled syringe (IV,SC)			ent-council-htac-recommendation-for-the-inclusion-of-filgrastim-300-mcg-0-9-ml-solution-iv-sc-0-9-ml-pre-filled-syringe-for-the-treat/
Deferasirox 90 mg and 180 mg film-coated tablet	Recommended for minor inclusion in the PNF	Yes	https://hta.dost.gov.ph/department-circular-no-2023-0059-health-technology-assessment-council-htac-recommendation-for-the-inclusion-of-deferasirox-90-mg-and-180-mg-film-coated-tablet-for-chronic-iron-overload-due/
Mesalazine 1g prolonged-release tablet, mesalazine 2g prolonged-release granules, and mesalazine 1g suppository	Recommended for minor inclusion in the PNF	Yes	Annex only to the Letter of Recommendation to the Secretary of Health
Insulin glargine 100 IU/mL, 3mL vial	Recommended for minor inclusion in the PNF	Yes	Annex only to the Letter of Recommendation to the Secretary of Health