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Addressing challenges in access to oncology medicines

With the EU Health Programme support, the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) reviewed the current state of access to oncology medicines across OECD and EU countries, and explored the policies and practices adopted by countries to address a number of challenges specific to these medicines.

The report shows that the healthcare systems adopt various strategies to address many of the challenges that come with novel oncology medicines (e.g the high and increasing uncertainty at the time of marketing authorisation, the pricing of products with multiple indications and of those used in combination regimens, and their budget impact). Such strategies include early dialogues between regulatory authorities, HTA institutions and companies, use of managed entry agreements to mitigate financial risks, introduction of capped and earmarked budgets for the funding of innovative oncology medicines or for the temporary funding pending the generation of further evidence.

The report shows that access to oncology medicines remains unequal across OECD and EU countries. It assessed approval and coverage status across 23 countries for a sample of 109 product/indications used in five cancer sub-types and supportive care. Across the sample, the average time between date of first marketing authorisation and subsequent authorisation in other countries/regions ranged from 12 to 17 months. Among the policy options to address the identified challenges OECD recommends the tracking of use by indication through routinely collected data, registries or post-marketing studies for ex-post price adjustments or improving the performance-based managed entry agreements to support the generation and collection of on-market evidence. Last but not least, when necessary countries shall prefer fixed co-payments rather than co-insurance, in order to ensure that these do not undermine access or impose catastrophic costs on households with cancer patients.

- [Read the report](#)