Questions from the public:
September 2024 public Board meeting

1. **Will NICE continue to monitor whether the severity modifier is having an impact on the proportion of positive recommendations for cancer treatments, compared to the** **end of life criteria? If NICE begin to see a negative impact, will this prompt further review of the severity modifier?**

NICE is committed to continuing to monitor the impact of the severity modifier. We plan to continue to monitor the mean weighting applied to technology appraisal decisions. If the cumulative mean weighting falls below 1.10 for 2 consecutive quarters, we will investigate the causes and identify whether corrective action was needed. This would include an investigation of the impact of the modifier on the proportion of positive recommendations.

1. **Has the severity modifier been proven to be opportunity cost neutral or opportunity price neutral? I.e. does it account for overall budget impact and population size or just for the average modifier given?**

When the severity modifier was introduced, it was considered to be opportunity cost neutral in relation to the end of life modifier based on analyses of historical technology appraisals comparing the average QALY weight per decision under the two modifiers. For pragmatic reasons, the analyses did not account for the relative size (for example, population size or budget impact) of each decision. The board and stakeholders agreed at the time this was appropriate and the same approach has therefore been used as the basis for assessing whether the modifier has met the objective of opportunity cost neutrality using data from technology appraisals undertaken using the new methods.

1. **Will there be any public consultation on societal preferences research?**

NICE would not usually consult on a research study. The study will use a representative sample of the population as its purpose will be to elicit the views of the public on severity weighting. Importantly, if the research leads to a proposed change to NICE’s methods, these proposed changes would be subject to public consultation.

1. **The difference between 1.125 (previous End of Life average weighting) and 1.103 (current average weighting) seems very small yet at the individual appraisal level the impact is huge, particularly for medicines that would have been previously end of life. Going beyond opportunity cost neutrality devalues medicines which will have an impact on future medicines and the longer it goes on the worse this will be. Given further research is happening and will take time could NICE not adjust to reach previous average QALY weight now, knowing that future adjustment will be more robustly evidenced based taking into account societal preferences?**

The historical weights of interest for NICE’s review are the average end of life weight for the primary+ subsample (1.122) and the average severity weight for the implementation+ subsample (1.125). These two subsamples best reflect the average QALY weights observed before and after the introduction of the severity modifier.

Overall, the mean weight applied to technology appraisal decisions since the implementation of the severity modifier has been very similar to the historical mean weight under the end of life modifier. This indicates that opportunity cost neutrality is being achieved. Therefore, no adjustment to the severity modifier is required. We will continue monitoring the mean weighting applied to technology appraisal decisions. If the cumulative mean weighting were to fall below 1.10 for 2 consecutive quarters, this would trigger further investigation.