

HTA - A Critical Reappraisal

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Introduction

- Two questions: Why do we need a ‘critical reappraisal’?
- What follows?
- STS perspective



Why a critical reappraisal? (1)

**Gap between initial rhetoric and
subsequent practice**

**a response to complex
professional context of the 1970s.**



Why a critical reappraisal? (2)

The context in which decisions regarding new medical technologies are made is changing

Tension between rhetoric of evidence and hopes/expectations

The idea of the *empirical slippery slope*



Why a critical reappraisal? (3)

**Detailed studies of specific health
technologies show limitations of
assessments**

**for example: cochlear implant
data too limited and assumptions
inappropriate**



What follows?

Need to use wider range of evidence

Make use of detailed studies of technologies

More use of qualitative research methods



Organization of HTA

**New political configurations
demand new institutional
configuration**

Need dialogue



The price to be paid...

Loss of generalisability

Assessments that are comprehensive, socially ‘robust’, sensitive to variation don’t travel too well!