

# **Health Technology as Policy: Challenges for Technology Assessment**

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# Overview

- The scope of HTA, in rhetoric and practice
- 3 paradigms of HTA
- Evidence and policy decisions
  
- Gaps in HTA as policy analysis
- Opportunities for social sciences & humanities inquiry

# Health Technology

“...prevention and rehabilitation, vaccines, pharmaceuticals, and devices, medical and surgical procedures, and the systems within which health is protected and maintained.”

- International Network of Agencies for Health Technology Assessment, 2003

# Health Technology Assessment

“Technology assessment in health care is a multidisciplinary field of policy analysis. It studies the medical, social, ethical, and economic implications of development, diffusion, and use of health technology.”

– International Network of Agencies for Health Technology Assessment, 2003

## The “Appraisal Gap”

“CCOHTA's current HTA mandate limits its work to an unbiased assessment of the current research and excludes the provision of recommendations or guidance to decision-makers. As a consequence, **CCOHTA's work rarely incorporates views about relative priority, equity, acceptability, feasibility or legal, ethical and psychosocial issues.** The resulting 'appraisal gap' can make it difficult for some jurisdictions to effectively incorporate assessments in policy development...the Business Plan does not address the appraisal gap. CCOHTA believes such a change in mandate should only be contemplated within the context of the National Strategy for HTA.”

CCOHTA, *Preparing for the National Strategy: 2003-2004 Business Plan*. 2003, Canadian Coordinating Office for Health Technology Assessment: Ottawa. p. 6

# “Health Technology Policy Analysis”

- “**Health Technology Strategy 1.0**” proposes a “...means for developing shared policy advice to aid health technology investment decisions in all jurisdictions. This policy advice needs to be clear, concise, and timely.”
  - - F/P/T Advisory Cttee on Information & Emerging Technologies, 2004, *Health Technology Strategy 1.0*, p. 2
- “The decision to fund and operationalize a technology on a wide-scale in a jurisdiction requires a more comprehensive analysis - **a health technology policy analysis** - that addresses all the policy questions.”
  - - F/P/T Advisory Cttee on Information & Emerging Technologies, 2004, *Health Technology Strategy 1.0*, p. 4

# Paradigms of HTA

- The **Productivity** Paradigm:
  - Effectiveness, Efficiency, Appropriateness
- The **Impacts** Paradigm:
  - Effects, Context
- The **Process** Paradigm
  - Who, where, how...(and what about “the public”?)

## An Evaluation Model for Coverage Decisions

### Criterion

**Purpose:**

**Effectiveness:**

**Other effects:**

**Cost:**

**Demand:**

**Efficiency:**

**What does it do?**

**How well does it work?**

**What else does it do?**

**How much of the budget?**

**How many, how stable?**

**How cost effective is it?**

### Judgment

**OK**

**Not OK**

**OK**

**Not OK**

**OK**

**Not OK**

**OK**

**Not OK**

**OK**

**Not OK**

**OK**

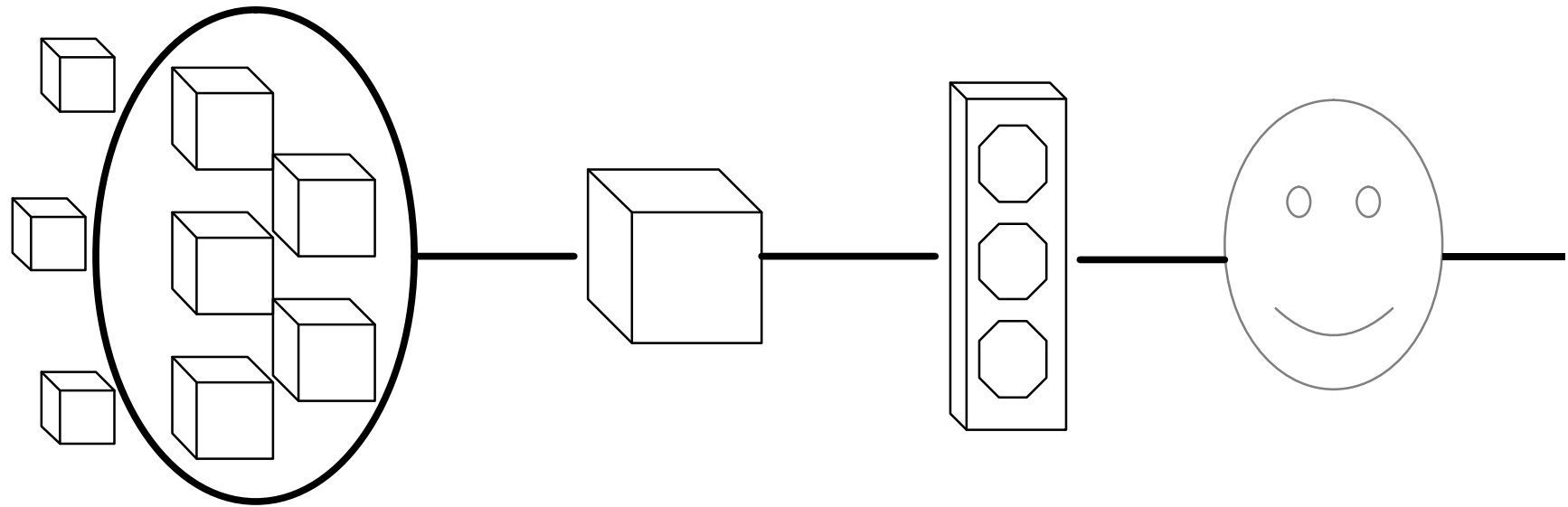
**Not OK**



## An Evaluation Model for Coverage Decisions

<u>Criterion</u>	<u>Judgment</u>			<u>Cover?</u>		
<b>Purpose</b>	<b>OK</b>	<b>Not OK</b>	<b><i>Unclear</i></b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b><i>Maybe...</i></b>
<b>Effectiveness</b>	<b>OK</b>	<b>Not OK</b>	<b><i>Unclear</i></b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b><i>Maybe ...</i></b>
<b>Other effects</b>	<b>OK</b>	<b>Not OK</b>	<b><i>Unclear</i></b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b><i>Maybe ...</i></b>
<b>Cost</b>	<b>OK</b>	<b>Not OK</b>	<b><i>Unclear</i></b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b><i>Maybe ...</i></b>
<b>Demand</b>	<b>OK</b>	<b>Not OK</b>	<b><i>Unclear</i></b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b><i>Maybe ...</i></b>
<b>Efficiency</b>	<b>OK</b>	<b>Not OK</b>	<b><i>Unclear</i></b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b><i>Maybe ...</i></b>

# HTA and “Evidence Based Decision Making”



**Research**

**Synthesis**

**Advice**

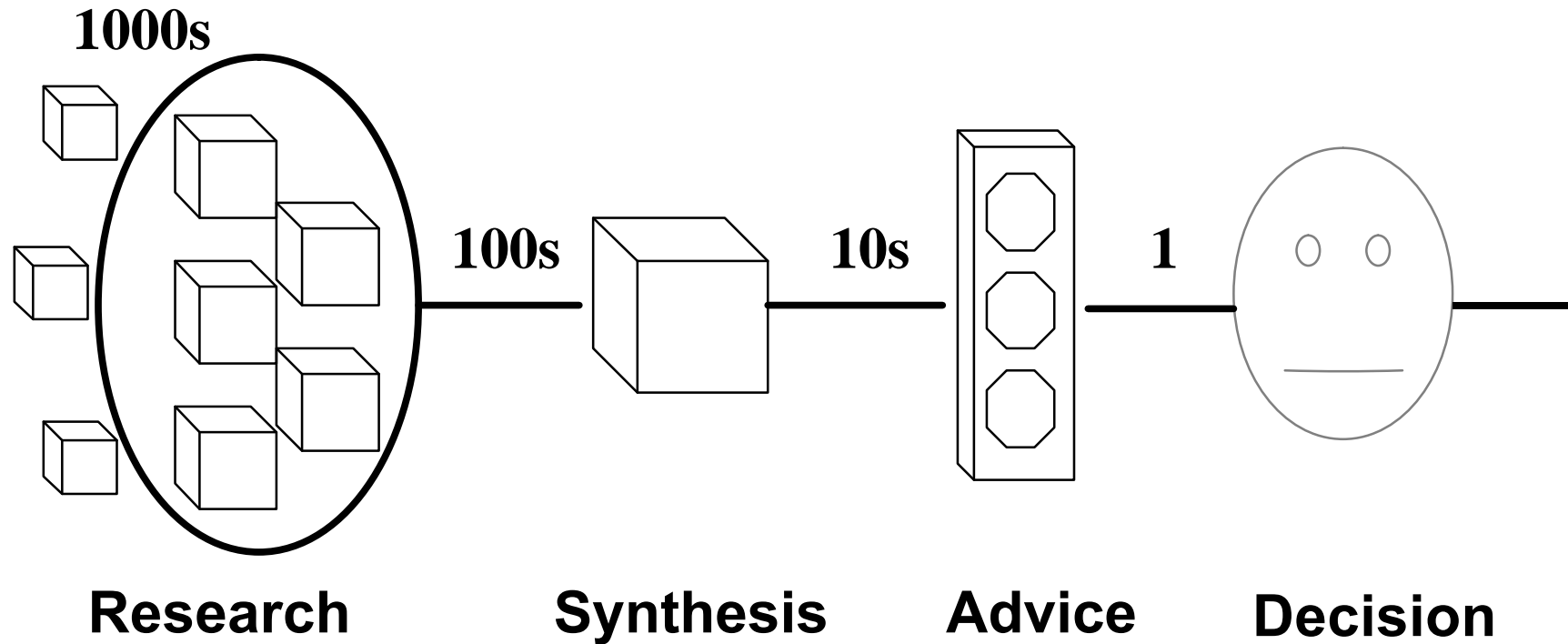
**Decision**

*Academia,  
Funding agencies  
Industry*

*HTA Agencies,  
HTA Committees*

*Payers,  
Administrators,  
Providers*

# Critique



*Whose questions?  
Whose funding?  
What's missing?  
What is this stuff?*

*Methods?  
Inference?*

*Interpretation?  
Other influences?*

# **Policy Maker Complaints about HTA**

- Too technical
- Too slow
- Too little primary research
- Too little adaptation to context
- Too non-directive
- Inadequate capacity to meet demand

# Moving forward: Questioning Technologies

- **Impact paradigm research**
  - More of it
  - Unit of analysis: the *policy makers'* dilemma
  - Framing the productivity questions
  - Synthesis
  - Role of qualitative research as “evidence”
  - Speed, clarity, brevity of reporting
  - From evidence to message to judgment

# Moving Forward: Questioning HTA as HTPA

- **Gaps in evidence based policy models**
  - Genesis of evidence
  - Missing evidence
  - Evaluative criteria
  - Standards for evaluative criteria
  - Crafting *policies*, not making decisions