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Imaginary Worlds: The European Network for Health Technology Assessment (EUnetHTA) Recommendations for Health Economic Evaluations

Paul C Langley

University of Minnesota

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EUnetHTA, pseudoscience, economic evaluations, imaginary worlds, scientific method

abstract

The European Network for Health Technology Assessment (EUnetHTA) guidelines for health economic evaluations represent a consolidated view of non-binding recommendations for assessments of the relative effectiveness of pharmaceuticals or other health technologies. EUnetHTA views itself as the scientific and technological backbone of the development of health technology assessment in the European Union and among its member states and other partners. Unfortunately, the standards for health technology assessment proposed by EUnetHTA do not meet the standards of normal science. They do not support credible claims for the clinical and comparative cost-effectiveness of pharmaceuticals. In rejecting the standards of normal science the guidelines put to one side the opportunity not only to re-assess and replicate clinical and cost-effectiveness claims but to provide meaningful feedback on claims assessment to health care decision makers. The purpose of this review is to make the case that, in failing to support standards for experimentation, EUnetHTA is advocating its partners support the creation of modeled or simulated imaginary or false worlds.

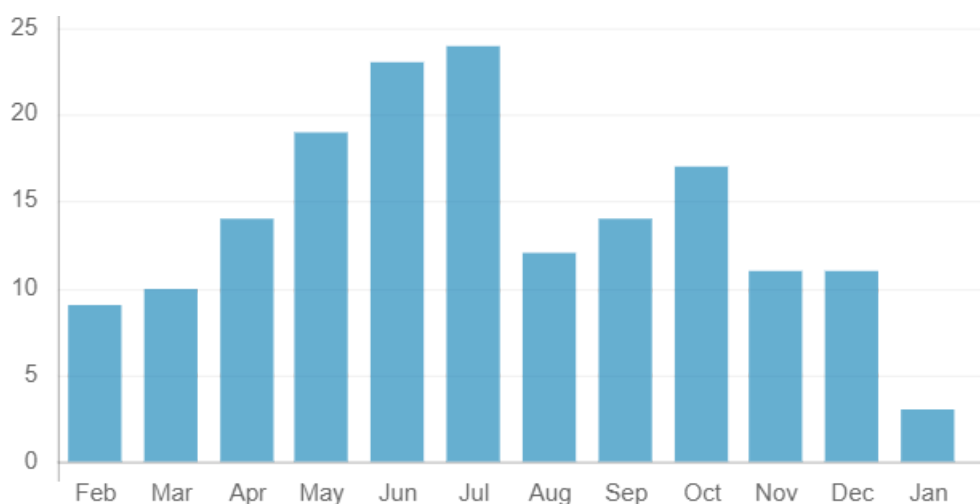
While EUnetHTA is not alone in recommending the construction of imaginary worlds to support formulary decisions, there is still the opportunity to revisit these recommendations and decide whether or not to encourage a scientifically rigorous approach to health technology assessments - to abandon a commitment to intelligent design in favor of natural selection.

Conflict of Interest

None

Type: Commentary

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