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Transparency, Imaginary Worlds and ICER Value Assessments

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ICER, VMAT2 inhibitors, PARP inhibitors, value assessments, pseudoscience, credible claims, imaginary worlds, simulations

abstract

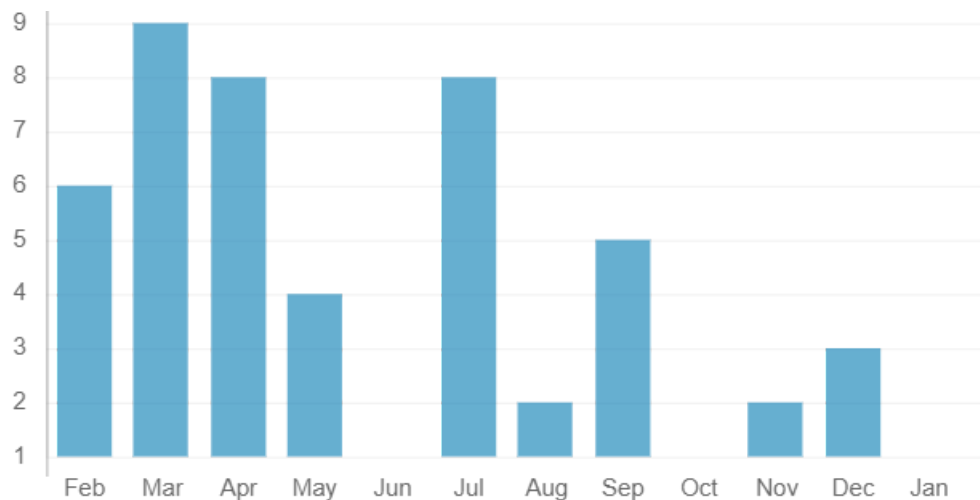
The Institute for Clinical and Economic Review (ICER) is seen as offering a credible platform for evaluating the pricing policies for pharmaceutical products and devices. Over the past few years ICER has presented a stream of reports, many of which have recommended substantial price discounts where the results of a lifetime cost-per-QALY modeling suggests they are out of line with notional willingness to pay thresholds and arbitrary budget constraints. At the same time, there have been growing concerns over the lack of transparency in the ICER value assessment process, focusing in particular on the refusal by ICER to allow access to its value assessment modeling framework. The purpose of this brief commentary is to point out that the position taken by ICER over model access is not defensible; the arguments given are specious. This ongoing refusal undercuts the ICER claim to be independent and the credibility of ICER recommendations for price discounting. The solution is for ICER to commit to a transparent process of value assessment, allowing in particular access to its models and for the ICER model to be subject to an independent assessment. At the same time,

manufacturers and other stakeholders should have access to the model with the opportunity to challenge the model through developing model frameworks which they feel better represent product value. This advocacy, it should be noted, does not reflect acceptance of the ICER lifetime cost-per-QALY value assessment framework. Health care decision makers would be better served by a value assessment framework that provided short-term credible, evaluable and replicable claims, facilitating meaningful feedback to decision makers, and not on the construction of simulated imaginary worlds.

Conflict of Interest: None

Type: Commentary

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