

## WHO SHOULD ASSESS THE RELEVANCE OF PROCEDURES AND HOW?

**Speakers:** **Paul FRAPPÉ**, President of the College of general practice - CMG | France, **Patrick GASSER**, President of the Union of medical specialists - Avenir Spé | France, **Elisabeth HUBERT**, Former Minister ; President of the National Federation of Hospitalisation at Home - FNEHAD | France, **Alexandre de la TAILLE**, President of the French association of urology - AFU | France, **Stefanie THOMAS**, Head of Quality Assurance Unit at the Institute for Quality and Efficiency in Health Care - QWiG | Germany

Debate led by **Philippe DENORMANDIE**, Medical Advisor at the MNH | France

### **A holistic approach to relevance that puts the patient the centre of its assessment**

The relevance of medical procedures should be assessed in the context of the patient's overall healthcare pathway. This holistic approach is essential to ensure personalized and patient-centred care. Thus, since patients are better equipped to express their needs and expectations, it is essential to place them at the core of the assessment process of procedures' relevance. The patient's community, societal and local background and collaboration are essential for assessing the relevance of healthcare procedures. For instance, a scientific outcome can be interpreted differently depending on the patient, the geographic region, and the specific circumstances involved. Over time, science has evolved from a dictatorial approach to one based on inquiry and enlightenment.

### **Ensuring the quality of medical procedures by monitoring their relevance**

The quality of medical procedures is contingent on the ability to perform them in the best possible way for patients. On the other hand, the necessity of a procedure for a specific patient depends on its relevance, and therefore, a high-quality procedure may not be deemed appropriate for that patient. Incorporating a multidisciplinary approach and considering the diverse opinions of healthcare professionals can broaden perspectives on the relevance of some medical procedures. Furthermore, measuring the significance of medical procedures carried out by some healthcare practitioners can serve as a viable alternative to the more complex implementing process of monitoring the quality of their work. This is the case in Germany, where the assessment of medical procedures' quality determines their reimbursement. However, quality indicators are difficult to implement in Germany due to resistance coming from some health professionals.

Implementing a regional approach to assess the relevance of medical procedures would empower patients and health professionals and make them collaborate to define appropriate medical procedures. This must be supported through the development of a methodology adjustable to the local context and the individual. Annual surveys among health professionals specialized in urology are a compelling example of such an approach. These surveys follow the implementation of practice guidelines by the French association of urology (AFU) to ensure the relevance of medical procedures.

### **Collecting data allows for the development of computer tools that track medical procedures' relevance**

Information technology tools can simplify data collection and analysis, thus contribute to improving the assessment process of medical procedures' relevance. For instance, electronic medical records can be used to track patients' healthcare pathways and to identify non relevant medical procedures. The concrete measure of the relevance of medical procedures could be achieved through the implementation of pertinent tools, that give health professionals adapted guidelines for their daily practices. Moreover, using data from online appointment-booking platforms and from patients' medical records could help prioritize patients' referrals.

### **Today's relevance might be challenged by that of tomorrows**

The utilitarian aspect of assessing the relevance of medical procedures takes precedence over their financial aspect. The relevance of medical procedures must be continually challenged. Humanity and humility must play a prevailing role in discerning and evaluating the relevance of medical procedures.