

Attending a Scottish Health Technology Council (SHTC) meeting

Information for participating patient organisations

SHTC meetings

The SHTC role is to advise on and support best use of health technology interventions within NHS Scotland. SHTC is made up of representatives from NHS boards, clinical and professional networks, academia, National Procurement and Scottish Government. It also includes two volunteer public partners, who represent a public view.

What information is assessed at the meeting?

When we look at health technologies, we consider:

- How well the technology works compared to currently used treatments.
- What difference the health technology makes to the lives of patients and carers.
- The number of patients likely to benefit from the technology.
- How safe the technology is.
- How much the technology costs compared to other treatment options.

The SHTC takes decisions by consensus following discussion of the evidence. Our advice statements are published on our website as soon as possible after each meeting and present the view of the SHTC on the clinical effectiveness, safety and cost effectiveness evidence for the technology being considered in the context of NHS Scotland. The status of SHTC recommendations is “required to consider”. This means that when NHS planners and decision makers are considering a technology for use in their area, they should take into account the advice we publish.

What is my role as a participating patient organisation representative?

Your role is to present your patient organisation submission to the SHTC and answer any questions which members may have about it. PowerPoint templates are available for presentations.

Who from my patient organisation can participate?

Two representatives per submitting patient organisation are able to participate at the SHTC meeting, during discussions for the agenda item for the technology a submission was provided for.

For joint patient organisation submissions, one representative per named patient organisation is able to participate.

What is expected of me during the meeting?

The Public Involvement Advisor will discuss with you in the weeks leading up to the meeting, how you plan to present your patient organisation submission, give you advice on the best way to do this and provide any assistance that you need with your presentation.

At the start of the meeting you will be in the physical or virtual public gallery depending on the format of the meeting. At the beginning of discussions about the technology for which you provided a submission for, the Chair will invite you to join the table for the entire discussion about the technology and ask you to introduce yourself.

When it is your turn to present, you will have up to 10 minutes to give an overview of your patient organisation submission. If a council member has a question regarding your submission, they will ask permission from the Chair for the question to be asked. If the question is appropriate, the Chair will invite you to answer.

What if I am unable to attend the meeting?

We understand that it is not always possible for patient organisations to send a representative to attend the SHTC. If you are unable to attend in person, your submission will still be included in the members' meeting papers and form part of the presentation about the technology to ensure it is still a key part of the decision making process.

Do I need to stay for the entire meeting?

You are welcome to stay for the entire meeting but can leave after the technology you have made a submission for has been discussed.

What will happen when I arrive at the meeting?

If the meeting is being held in a physical location, you will be welcomed by the Public Involvement Advisor, who will explain how the meeting will work. They will be your point of contact throughout the meeting and will deal with any queries you may have. A public attendees' space within the meeting venue is provided for you to use before the SHTC meeting and during the break.

If the meeting is being held virtually, then full details of how to access the meeting will be sent to you in advance by the Public Involvement Advisor.

Will committee papers be provided for the council meeting?

You will be supplied with an information pack around a week before the meeting containing an agenda and copies of the draft advice for each technology. If this has been emailed to you, it should be deleted after the meeting or appropriately disposed of if a hard copy was sent out to you in the post. This is because there may be confidential information contained in the paperwork and the detail within them may be subject to revision following the meeting.

Who will be at the meeting?

In addition to the SHTC members, staff involved in running and supporting the meeting will be in attendance. Invited observers may also be present, along with members of the public who have registered for a place in the public gallery.

How long will the meeting last?

The Chair will outline the agenda at the start of the meeting. The presentations and discussions usually take around 60 minutes for each technology. Depending on the volume of business and discussions, meetings may finish slightly earlier or later than billed on the agenda.

Will the final advice be announced at the meeting?

SHTC aims to finalise its advice during the meeting but the advice will not be considered final until it is published on our website, as changes to it can be made after the meeting.

When will the final SHTC advice be published?

SHTC advice is published on the website, as soon as possible after the meeting it was discussed at.

Submitting patient organisations can in most circumstances be provided with the SHTC decision under embargo, approximately one week before the information is made public. This is in strict confidence and is to enable you to prepare any advisory services you may provide for patients and carers.

Can I talk to members of the committee?

The role of SHTC members is to make an independent assessment of the evidence. It is very important that no one tries to influence an individual member during breaks or outside the meeting on any topics that are under discussion.

Can I take notes at the meeting?

You may take notes but should ensure that confidential information is not shared, such as information available in the paperwork. Meeting minutes will be published on the SHTC website around four weeks after the meeting.

Can I use social media during the meeting?

The use of mobile phones, and recording or live reporting of committee meeting proceedings is not permitted during the committee meeting.

What facilities are there to accommodate people with disabilities if the meeting is held in a physical location?

Wheelchair users have direct access to the venue from the street. However, due to the venue's building regulations set by the fire service, there are limits on the number of people with mobility problems we can accommodate at meetings. If you are a wheelchair user or have walking difficulties, please contact the Public Involvement Advisor so we can ensure appropriate support is in place.

The committee meeting room is fitted with an induction loop for people with a hearing impairment. Please let us know in advance if you need to use it.

Will I be able to claim expenses to attend if meeting in a physical location?

You are able to claim reasonable standard class travel to attend the meeting. If you are planning to claim for any travel, this must be agreed with the Public Involvement Advisor in advance of the meeting. For further details about claiming expenses, please speak to the Public Involvement Advisor.

Feedback & evaluation

The Public Involvement Advisor will send you an online survey link following the meeting, asking for your opinions on the experience of participating in the SHTC meeting. We encourage you to provide honest feedback to help us review and develop our processes.

If you have any questions, please contact our Public Involvement Advisor:

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Telephone: 0141 227 3257 / 07929 026658