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24th March 2021

MEDIA RELEASE

Fast-tracked medical technology should be on par with pharmaceuticals

*Medical Technology Group report recommends
new NHS model for adoption of innovative treatments*

The system for introducing new medical technologies into the NHS is complex, crowded, and difficult to manage, while innovative treatments with devices should be given the same support as new medicines, according to a new report by the Medical Technology Group.

Current NHS mechanisms to support the uptake and use of innovative technology are severely limited in scope and are focused on 'picking winners' rather than the broad system-wide adoption of new technology, the report states.

It points to the Accelerated Access Pathway for instance, which supports fewer than ten technologies per year, and the lack of a clear mechanism to support the widespread uptake of innovative products across the NHS. The absence of a broad, national commissioning policy means that patients sometimes miss out on the benefits of established technology due to regional variation in access.

The MTG compares the uptake of medical technology to pharmaceuticals, which can be fast-tracked to patients through mechanisms such as the Early Access to Medicines Scheme and the Cancer Drugs Fund. The majority of NICE Technology Assessments, which lead to mandatory funding, are medicines - it points out - while treatments supported by a device follow the Interventional Procedure Guideline, which does not enjoy the same funding support.

Barbara Harpham, Chair of the Medical Technology Group, said, "The benefits of medical technology for patients have been clear during the Covid-19 pandemic – from the use of ventilators to remote monitoring systems that have alleviated the strain on the NHS.

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“If we are going to take advantage of new technology to enable the health service to recover and become more efficient in the future, we need a simple, clear mechanism for adopting new treatments, similar to those in other European countries.

“To bring about real change, we must have a system that is clear and open to a broad range of technology and must involve patients in the process.”

The MTG makes eleven recommendations for a new Medical Technology Access Accelerator in its report, including:

- A single front door – an ‘Innovation Office’ to triage new devices and support innovators - who find the current system difficult to navigate - by providing a pathway for technologies and a route to patients, connecting them with the relevant agencies and support.
- A single model – while there is no ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach, there is a need for a clear pathway for innovators, so that they receive support from the most appropriate organisation. The system should be clear about the level of data and evidence needed for a technology to be adopted.
- Guaranteed funding and commissioning – all technologies coming through the Access Accelerator should receive temporary commissioning during evidence development, then mandatory funding and permanent commissioning once a final decision is made.
- A clear role for patients – often patients are the last to be consulted on the technology available to them; they should be involved in the decisions around its adoption, and the evaluation of its true impact.
- Information for patients on technologies and available treatments should be easy to access and in plain English.

The full Medical Technology Access Accelerator recommendations are available [here](#) [LINK]

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For media enquiries, please contact:
The Medical Technology Group, Colin Hallmark or Sarah Carter

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0207 736 1888 / mtg@3nine.co.uk

About the Medical Technology Group

The Medical Technology Group (MTG) is a coalition of patient groups, research charities and medical device manufacturers working to make medical technologies available to everyone who needs them. Uptake of medical technology in the UK is not as good as it should be, given its great potential to provide value for money to the NHS, patients and taxpayers. The MTG believes that patients and clinicians need better information about medical technologies so that they can make informed choices about their medical care.

www.mtg.org.uk