

Governing drug reimbursement policy in Poland: The role of the state, civil society and the private sector

Web Appendix 2– Interview prompt guides

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List of abbreviations

AHTAPol	Agency of Health Technology Assessment (<i>Agencja Oceny Technologii Medycznych</i>)
CC	Consultative Council (Polish: <i>Rada Konsultacyjna</i>) at the Agency of Health Technology Assessment
HTA	Health technology assessment
MoH	Ministry of Health (<i>Ministerstwo Zdrowia</i>)
NHF	National Health Fund (<i>Narodowy Fundusz Zdrowia</i>)

Introduction

This Web Appendix offers supplementary interview data concerning the main findings presented in the article “Governing drug reimbursement policy in Poland: The role of the state, civil society and the private sector”.

When interviewing about the mechanisms of power in Polish drug reimbursement policy-making, we utilised a semi-structured interviewing scheme, as it offered a desirable balance between generating comparable data and flexibility in conducting interviews.

The general interviewing framework focused on a few broad research questions:

- Decision-making mechanisms at subsequent stages of the drug reimbursement process.
- Relationships among state organisations involved in the reimbursement process.
- Mechanisms of consultations between state organisations and drug companies throughout the reimbursement process.
- Organisational targets of lobbying by drug companies.
- Types and effectiveness of methods of pharmaceutical lobbying.
- Relationships between experts and drug companies.
- directions of social mobility in the drug reimbursement policy domain.

These generic questions were customised for each of the major categories of interviewees.

The questionnaires were evolving over the course of the fieldwork. Initially, they comprised general questions aimed at gaining familiarity with the research field and avoiding the premature exclusion of potentially significant topics. Later, the questionnaire became more structured to facilitate answering more specific research questions.

A typical interviewing scheme consisted of a few general open questions and a set of follow up and probing questions related to each of them (Berry 2002). The interviews were

aimed to explore participants' definitions of mechanisms of drug reimbursement, encouraged them to structure explanations, and allowed them to decide about the weight of particular issues discussed during an interview (cf. Dexter 1970). It follows that the interviewees enjoyed substantial freedom in deciding about the weight of particular topics and thus the length of their answers. Relatedly, the questionnaires were utilised flexibly to explore unexpected yet promising themes emerging during interviews (cf. Berry 2002; Leech 2002).

The Web appendix comprises prompt guides utilised with the following categories of interviewees:

- MoH officials.
- NHF officials.
- AHTAPol officials (including CC members).
- Members of Parliament.
- National and regional consultants.
- Employees of drug companies.
- Employees of public relations or lobbying firms.
- Employees of law firms.
- Employees of Health Technology Assessment firms.
- Representatives of patient organisations.
- Journalists commenting on drug reimbursements policy.

1. Prompt guide for interviews with MoH officials

- Could you talk me through how reimbursement lists are created?
- Could you talk me through the procedure of developing therapeutic programmes?
- What is the role of the “procedure of receiving external clients” in MoH’s relationships with drug companies?
- How would you describe the procedure of price negotiations with drug companies?
- How does the MoH cooperate with the AHTAPol, particularly the CC?
- What is the political importance of recommendations issued by the AHTAPol?
- How does the MoH cooperate with national and regional consultants?
- What are the typical forms of relationships between national and regional consultants and drug companies?
- How are patient organisations involved in the reimbursement process?
- What are the most effective methods of pressure utilised by patient organisations in relation to the MoH?
- What methods of pressure employed by patient organisations are the most effective?
- What are the typical forms of relationships between patient organisations and drug companies?
- What are the most effective methods of influence utilised by innovative drug companies in the context of drug reimbursement policy?
- What are the main similarities and differences between lobbying methods employed by innovative and generic companies?
- How big is the outflow of employees from the MoH to the pharmaceutical sector? Is there any mobility in the reverse direction?
- What are the reasons behind this mobility pattern?

2. Prompt guide for interviews with NHF officials

- Could you talk me through the procedure of establishing therapeutic programmes?
- What is the role of national consultants in creating therapeutic programmes?
- What is the role of scientific (medical) societies in establishing therapeutic programmes?
- How would you describe cooperation between the NHF and the MoH in establishing therapeutic programmes?
- How would you describe cooperation between the NHF and the AHTAPol in establishing therapeutic programmes?
- What is the political role of recommendations issued by the AHTAPol?
- How would you describe the procedure of price negotiations with drug companies?
- What are the most effective methods of influence utilised by drug companies?
- How big is the outflow of employees from the NHF to the pharmaceutical sector? Is there any mobility in the reverse direction?
- What are the reasons behind this mobility pattern?

3. Prompt guide for interviews with AHTAPol officials

- Could you talk me through the procedure of issuing recommendations by the AHTAPol?
- What is the role of AHTAPol analysts in developing AHTAPol recommendations?
- How does the CC develop its positions?
- How would you describe cooperation between the AHTAPol and the MoH?
- How are CC members selected by the Minister of Health?
- What is the political role of recommendations issued by the AHTAPol?

- What are the typical forms of cooperation between the CC and the President of the AHTAPol?
- What are the typical forms of cooperation between the CC and its external experts?
- How does the CC select its external experts?
- Are there any problems in relations between the CC and its external experts?
- What are the main forms of contacts between CC members and patient organisations?
- What are the main forms of contact between CC members and drug companies?
- How would you describe the effectiveness of the instruments for managing CC members' conflicts of interest?
- How big is the outflow of employees from the AHTAPol to the pharmaceutical sector? Is there any mobility in the reverse direction?
- What are the reasons behind this mobility pattern?

4. Prompt guide for interviews with Members of Upper and Lower Chambers of Parliament

- What is the role of Parliament in shaping drug reimbursement policy?
- How do patient organisations communicate their views to Members of Parliament about reimbursement policy?
- Which methods of influence utilised by patient organisations are the most effective?
- What are the main forms of relationships between patient organisations and drug companies?
- How do Members of Parliament try to influence drug reimbursement policy?
- What is the impact of Members of Parliament on drug reimbursement policy?
- How do drug companies contact Members of Parliament about drug reimbursement policy?

5. Prompt guide for interviews with national and regional consultants

- What is the role of national and regional consultants in shaping reimbursement policy?
- What are the typical forms of cooperation between national/regional consultants and the MoH / NHF?
- Which methods of communication employed by national consultants in relation to the MoH / NHF are the most effective?
- What are the typical forms of cooperation between national/regional consultants and the AHTAPol?
- What are the typical forms of cooperation between national/regional consultants and patient organisations?
- What are the typical forms of cooperation between national/regional consultants and the media?
- What are the typical forms of cooperation between national/regional consultants and drug companies?

6. Prompt guide for interviews with employees of drug companies and their associations

- What are the key factors determining the chances of a drug being reimbursed by the state?
- How difficult is it to introduce a drug to a reimbursement list / therapeutic programme?
- What is the role of lobbying by drug companies in shaping reimbursement policy?
- What are the most effective lobbying methods in the area of drug reimbursement?
- What is the role of KOLs in introducing drugs to reimbursement?
- How do drug companies establish relationships with KOLs in the medical milieu?

- What is the role of cooperation with patient organisations in introducing drugs to reimbursement?
- What are the main forms of cooperation between drug companies and patient organisations?
- What is the role of the media in introducing drugs to reimbursement?
- What are the main forms of cooperation between drug companies and the media?
- What is the role of Members of Parliament in the reimbursement process?
- What are the main forms of building relationships with of Members of Parliament and Senators?
- What is the role of support from diplomatic representations in introducing drugs to reimbursement?
- What is the role of HTA firms in the reimbursement process?
- What are the main criteria for selecting HTA firms?
- What are the main criteria for selecting public relations or lobbying firms by drug companies?
- What are the main forms of relationships between analysts working for the AHTAPol and drug companies?
- What are the main forms of relationships between CC members and drug companies?
- What are the main forms of relationships between high-ranking AHTA officials and drug companies?
- How big is the outflow of employees from state organisations to the pharmaceutical sector? Is there any mobility in the reverse direction?
- What are the reasons behind this mobility pattern?

7. Prompt guide for interviews with employees of public relations or lobbying firms

- Why do drug companies employ public relations/lobbying firms?
- What is the role of KOLs in introducing drugs to reimbursement?
- How do drug companies build relationships with KOLs?
- What is the role of patient organisations in introducing drugs to reimbursement?
- How do drug companies build relationships with patient organisations?
- What is the role of the media in introducing drugs to reimbursement?
- How do drug companies build relationships with journalists?
- What is the role of Members of Parliament and Senators in the reimbursement process?
- How do drug companies build relationships with Members of Parliament?
- What are the main problems in cooperation between public relations/lobbying firms and drug companies?

8. Prompt guide for interviews with employees of law firms

- What is the role of law firms in shaping drug reimbursement policy?
- Could you talk me through the drug reimbursement process in the MoH?
- What is the political significance of recommendations issued by the AHTAPol?
- What is the role of national and regional consultants in the reimbursement process?
- What is the role of patient organisations in the reimbursement process?
- What are the most effective methods of influence utilised by drug companies in relation to the MoH?
- What are the most effective methods of influence utilised by drug companies in relation to the AHTAPol?

- What are the most effective methods of influence utilised by drug companies in relation to the NHF?
- What are the most effective methods of influence utilised by drug companies in relation to national and regional consultants?
- What is the role of diplomatic representations in reimbursement policy?
- What are the main problems in cooperation between law firms and drug companies?
- How big is the outflow of employees from state organisations to the pharmaceutical sector? Is there any mobility in the reverse direction?
- What are the reasons behind this mobility pattern?

9. Prompt guide for interviews with employees of HTA firms

- What is the significance of a correct HTA report for the reimbursement of a drug?
- Why do drug companies outsource the development of HTA analyses?
- If you were the president of an innovative drug company, how would you choose an external HTA firm?
- Could you describe the most important rules of fruitful cooperation with a drug company?
- What are the most common problems in your cooperation with a drug company?
- What kind of help can a HTA firm offer a drug company in its dealings with the AHTAPol?
- What kind of help can a HTA firm offer a drug company in its dealings with the MoH?
- How open is the AHTAPol for cooperation with drug companies?
- What are the most common problems experienced by drug companies in their cooperation with the AHTAPol?

- How do HTA firms recruit their employees?
- How big is the outflow of employees from the AHTAPol to the pharmaceutical sector? Is there any mobility in the reverse direction?
- What are the reasons behind this mobility pattern?

10. Prompt guide for interviews with representatives of patient associations

- What are the most effective methods of getting the MoH interested in problems facing people with disease X?
- What are the main forms of cooperation between patient organisations and the AHTAPol?
- Could you describe the role of patient organisations during sessions of the CC?
- What are the main forms of cooperation between patient organisations and national and regional consultants?
- What are the main forms of cooperation between patient organisations and the NHF?
- How do patient organisations try to get Members of Parliament interested in their problems?
- How can they help you in trying to influence the MoH?
- How can patient organisations get the media interested in their problems?
- Do patient organisations cooperate with public relations companies? How?
- How do patient organisations decide about the drug therapies they endorse in the reimbursement process?
- How do patient organisations fund their activity?
- What are the typical forms of cooperation between patient organisations and drug companies?

- Do patient organisations tend to cooperate with each other frequently? Why? / Why not?

11. Prompt guide for interviews with journalists

- In what therapeutic areas can you observe the heaviest lobbying by drug companies?
- What are the main organisational targets of lobbying by drug companies?
- How do drug companies attempt to influence the drug reimbursement process?
- What is the role of journalists in the reimbursement process?
- How do drug companies attempt to build relationships with journalists?
- How do patient organisations attempt to influence the reimbursement process?
- How do drug companies attempt to build relationships with patient organisations?
- What is the role of Members of Parliament in the reimbursement process?
- How do drug companies attempt to build relationships with Members of Parliament?
- What is the role of medical experts, particularly national consultants, in the reimbursement process?
- How do drug companies attempt to build relationships with medical experts?

Literature

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