Results The overall level of obesity among Egyptian women rises from 30% in 1995 (urban=33%; rural=27%) to 40% in 2008 (urban=43%; rural=34%). Among urban women, in 1995, the prevalence of obesity is lower in the group without education (24%; 95% CI 19 to 29) in comparison to the group with secondary education (33%; 95% CI 29 to 37). In 2008, the prevalence of obesity has risen in a statistically significant manner in both groups compared with 1995. In addition, the prevalence in the group without education (45%; 95% CI 41 to 50) appears to have exceeded the prevalence in those with secondary education (41%; 95% CI 38 to 44). Although there is overlap in the CI at the 95% level, the overall trend suggests that the social gradient in obesity may be reversing, as predicted elsewhere.

Conclusion Egypt provides a dynamic model of the reversal of the social gradient of obesity. Further analysis of Demographic and Health Surveys using other indicators of socio-economic status and risk factors for obesity such as consumption of fruit and vegetables may shed light on the processes behind the probable gradient reversal, and the factors putting the poor at increased risk of obesity. This is important in informing urgent prevention efforts at a population level.

Policy

NEWS MEDIA COVERAGE OF NICE’S DECISIONS ON NEW HEALTH TECHNOLOGIES

doi:10.1136/jech.2010.120956.50

1H Chauhan, 2B Dhesi, 3N Patel, 4J Mohammed, 1A Ahmad, 2W Greenheld, 4Y-F Chen. College of Medical and Dental Sciences, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK; 3Public Health, Epidemiology and Biostatistics, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK

Objective This project aims to: (1) describe the frequency of news coverage in mass media related to the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) draft or final guidance; (2) analyse the types of evidence and sources of information that was quoted in the news; (3) compare whether the patterns of coverage differ between media.

Design A survey of news articles related to decisions made by NICE’s Health Technology Appraisal committees was conducted. Relevant news articles were retrieved from websites of major UK news media. Inclusion criteria were: (1) news articles related to specific NICE decision(s); (2) articles were written by a reporter/writer/editor of the news media. Articles that mentioned NICE for other reasons, columns and readers’ letters were excluded.

Setting Major UK news media, including national newspapers and news channels.


Main outcome measure The following data were collected by one author and checked by another: nature of guidance (disease area; positive or negative recommendation), use of generic or brand name author and checked by another: nature of guidance (disease area; positive or negative recommendation), use of generic or brand name author and checked by another: nature of guidance (disease area; positive or negative recommendation), use of generic or brand name author and checked by another: nature of guidance (disease area; positive or negative recommendation), use of generic or brand name author and checked by another: nature of guidance (disease area; positive or negative recommendation), use of generic or brand name author and checked by another: nature of guidance (disease area; positive or negative recommendation), use of generic or brand name author and checked by another: nature of guidance (disease area; positive or negative recommendation), use of generic or brand name author and checked by another: nature of guidance (disease area; positive or negative recommendation), use of generic or brand name author and checked by another: nature of guidance (disease area; positive or negative recommendation), use of generic or brand name author and checked by another: nature of guidance (disease area; positive or negative recommendation), use of generic or brand name author and checked by another: nature of guidance (disease area; positive or negative recommendation), use of generic or brand name author and checked by another: nature of guidance (disease area; positive or negative recommendation), use of generic or brand name

Results 529 articles were included. BBC, Daily Mail and The Telegraph published more than 50 articles related to health technology appraisal whereas ITN and News of the World published less than 10 articles during the 2-year period assessed. Two-thirds (220/329) of the articles were related to negative recommendations. There was significant difference in the proportion of articles relating to negative recommendations between individual sources of media (p=0.001) but not between types of media (p=0.236). Cancer (53%), neurology—mainly Alzheimer’s disease (22%), ophthalmology (13%) and rheumatology (10%) were most frequently covered areas. 58% (192/329) of the articles quoted only brand names without mentioning generic names of the drugs. Approximately 50% of articles included statements of effectiveness without referring to the source of evidence and another 40% did not describe clinical effectiveness. 24% of articles did not mention drug costs or cost-effectiveness.

Conclusion NICE decisions on new drugs, particularly negative recommendations, attracted significant media attention but the coverage and contents varied substantially between individual sources.