

# Accountability and Equity in Health Technology Assessment

## - Synthesis from Stakeholder Dialogue and the 4th Annual IVI Methods Summit

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### RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

There is cross-stakeholder consensus in the US on the urgency for improved methods and practice to better incorporate equity considerations into health technology assessment (HTA). The purpose of this study is to identify and communicate specific action steps for researchers, patient advocates, and research funders to systematically integrate equity considerations into HTA in the US.

### STUDY DESIGN

The Innovation and Value Initiative (IVI) designed a multi-phase study (Figure 1) to derive specific action steps. Diverse stakeholders representing patients and caregivers, patient advocates, researchers, payers, clinicians, and industry were engaged in all phases. Stage 1 involved a literature review to examine how equity considerations are incorporated into processes and methods in existing HTA approaches. In Stages 2 and 3, we engaged 40 stakeholders through over 30 hours of interviews and Roundtable discussions from September 2022 to January 2023, and qualitatively synthesized over 100 action steps relevant to HTA (Table 1). From this work emerged a Framework identifying actions in four domains, addressing **Power, People, and Processes; Data, Inputs and Infrastructure; Methods; and Communications and Use** (Figure 2).. In March 2023, IVI convened its **4th Annual Methods Summit** to review the recommended action steps and explore factors essential to their successful implementation.

Figure 1. Four-Stage Study Design

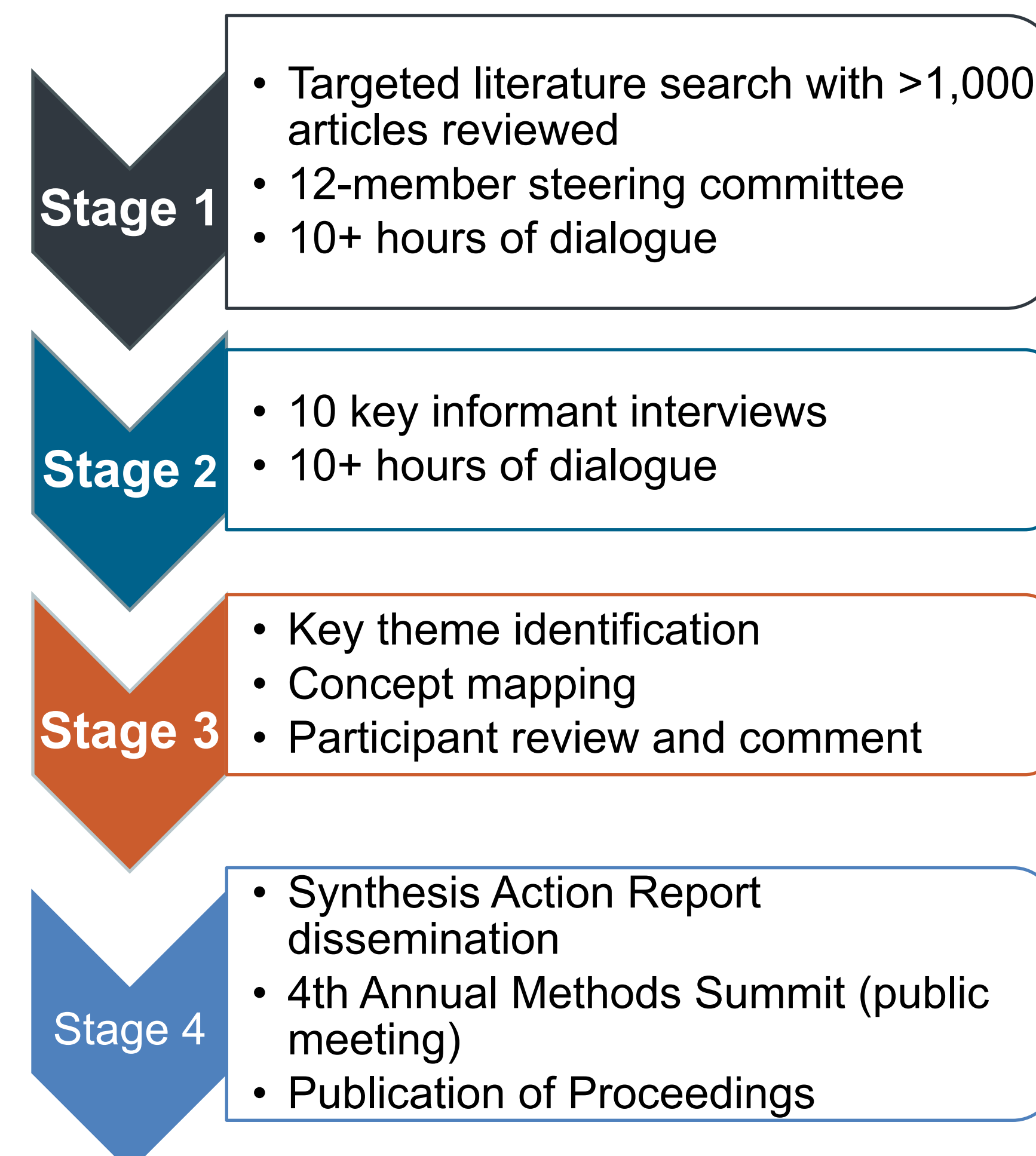


Figure 2. IVI Health Equity in HTA Framework

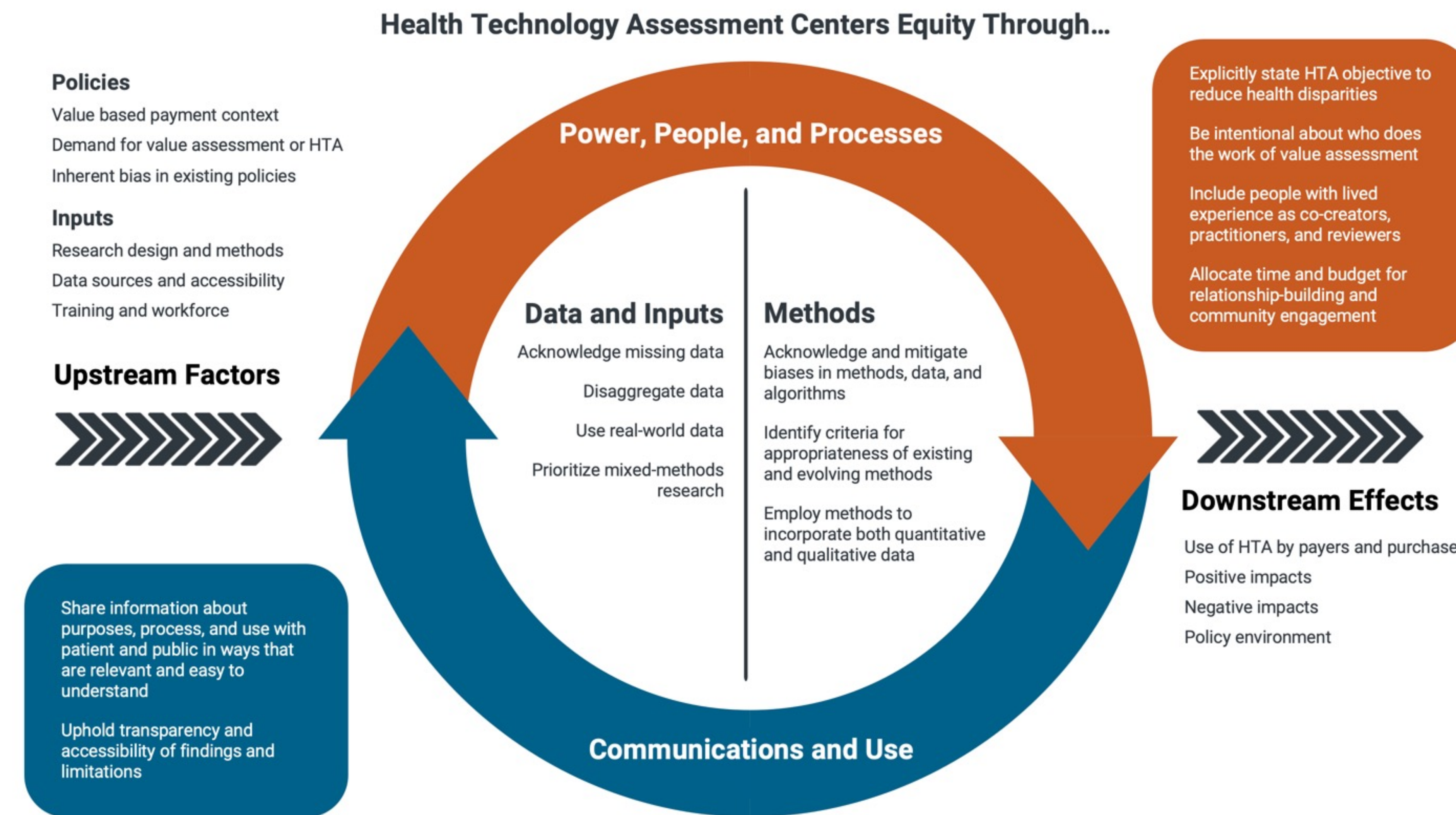


Table 1. Change Actions for Equity in HTA, Identified by Key Informants

Domain	Examples of Needed Change
<b>Power, People, and Processes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investing in early, authentic, and meaningful partnerships with patients and communities with fair compensation.</li> <li>Prioritizing lived-experience expertise in leadership, design, and execution.</li> <li>Increasing representation from marginalized communities, both in HTA practitioners and in data used.</li> </ul>
<b>Data and Inputs &amp; Methods</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investing in equity expertise as an essential skillset for researchers and others involved in HTA.</li> <li>Combining quantitative and qualitative data through mixed methods to understand health disparities, and acknowledge social, environmental, and historical factors driving health inequities. Explore and adapt methods in HTA.</li> </ul>
<b>Communications and Use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing transparency in who frames research and value questions, whose perspectives are reflected within HTA, and in reporting biases and missing data.</li> </ul>

### PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

Engagement with diverse stakeholders highlighted broad consensus that value cannot be defined without transparent, patient-centered action incorporating equity in all aspects and phases of the conduct of HTA. Domain-specific action steps, summarized in the March 2023 Blueprint and discussed during the Methods Summit, reflect the following key themes:

- > Fundamental change to the conduct of HTA is necessary to advance health equity.
- > Stakeholders in positions of power must be accountable for leading change, and for demonstrating allyship that includes and responds to the perspectives of patients and caregivers.
- > All actors must meaningfully engage patients and caregivers in HTA from the start.
- > HTA practitioners can no longer wait for better data. Action to identify data gaps and drive evidence development is imperative.
- > Mixed methods approaches are necessary to comprehensively capture patient perspectives on value, and must be tested.
- > Transparent, accessible communication is necessary for trust.
- > Establish clear accountability for change and measure progress for shared learning and continuous improvement.

### IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

As the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services considers methods appropriate for assessments of health technologies under the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), this study emphasizes the imperative actions that all stakeholder must implement to center equity in the processes, data collection, methods and communication of HTA. The framework provides structure for further discussion and testing of such actions, and the basis for accountability measures that will support decision-making for equitable access and outcomes.

### CONCLUSION

A systematic, multi-domain approach to incorporating equity considerations into HTA is needed to ensure equitable and patient-centered decision-making. Change steps are required by all stakeholders, with a focus on transparency, continuous learning and accountability to patients and caregivers for action.

### REFERENCES

- Bright, Jennifer. *No Value Without Equity: Action Opportunities Emerging from the IVI Health Equity Initiative*. IVI Value Blueprints Research Brief Series, January 2023.
- No Value Without Equity: Transforming Practice and Accountability for Equity in Health Technology Assessment*. IVI Health Equity Initiative Synthesis Report, March 2023.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Significant contribution from the IVI Health Equity Initiative Steering Committee. Funding from IVI membership contributions, and grants from PhRMA, Alexion Pharmaceuticals, and Janssen Scientific Affairs.

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