

HOW TO INCREASE THE PUBLIC LEGITIMACY OF HEALTHCARE RESOURCE ALLOCATION PROCESSES? LESSONS FROM AN ISRAELI CASE STUDY

Yael Assor

Department of Health Policy and Management, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel | Martin Buber Society of Fellows, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel | Edmond and Lily Safra Center for Ethics, Harvard University, USA

OBJECTIVES

The National Health Insurance Law enacted in 1995 stipulates a list of health services to which all Israeli residents are entitled. For the past 20 years, the list has been updated annually, as a function of a predetermined budget, according to recommendations from the Public National Advisory Committee (PNAC), which evaluates and prioritizes candidate technologies. This study assesses the public legitimacy of PNAC's resource-allocation process and draws on this case study to offer general insight for increasing the public legitimacy of such processes worldwide.

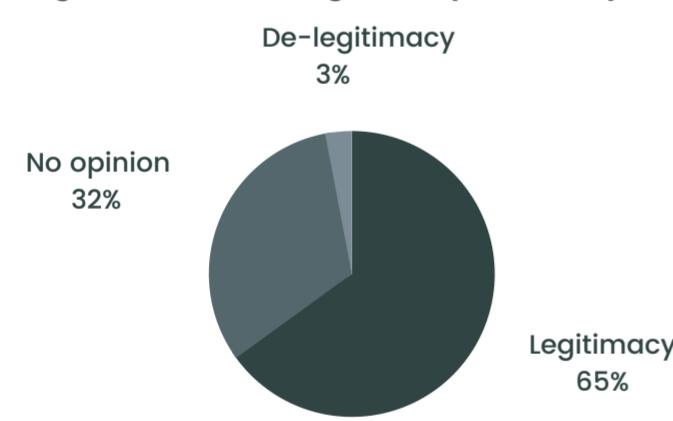
METHODS

A qualitative analysis of public discourse documents about PNAC (articles in the print media, court rulings and parliamentary debates (N=119) was conducted to assess the perceived legitimacy of the PNAC by the Israeli public. Further content analysis of these documents and semi-structured interviews with stakeholders (N=70) revealed the mainstays and threats to its legitimacy. Data analysis for this study was conducted according to the "grounded theory" methodology and using MAXQDA software.

RESULTS

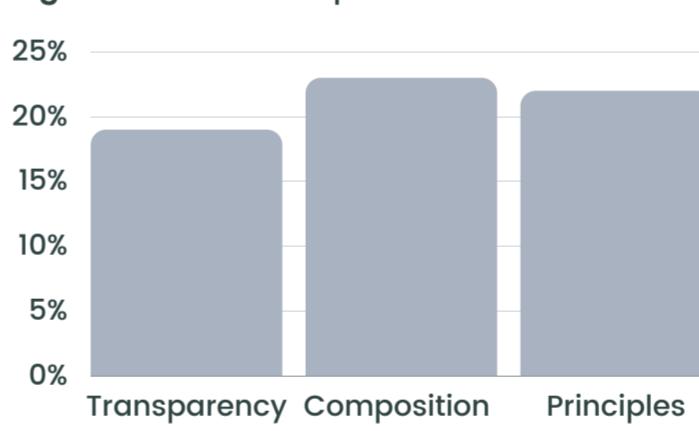
65% OF THE PUBLIC DISCOURSE DOCUMENTS SURVEYED EXPRESSED SUPPORT OF PNAC'S LEGITIMACY. ONLY 3% INCLUDED EXPLICIT VIEWS OF PNAC AS ILLEGITIMATE (FIGURE 1).

Figure 1: Level of legitimacy in surveyed documents



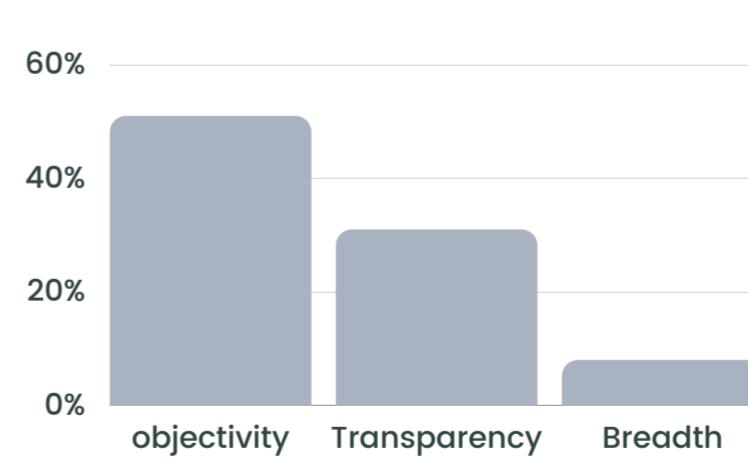
THE THREE MAJOR THREATS TO ITS LEGITIMACY PERTAIN TO: (1) THE COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE, PARTICULARLY THE LACK OF PATIENT REPRESENTATIVES; (2) ITS TRANSPARENCY MODEL; (3) ITS DECISION-MAKING PRINCIPLES (FIGURE 3).

Figure 3: Risk factor prevalence in data



THREE MAIN FACTORS CONTRIBUTE TO IT'S LEGITIMACY, IN ORDER OF PREVALENCE: (1)ITS PERCEIVED OBJECTIVITY AND PROFESSIONAL FOCUS; (2) ITS RELATIVE TRANSPARENCY; (3) BREADTH AND NOVELTY OF TECHNOLOGY DISCUSSED (FIGURE 2).

Figure 2: Factors contributing to legitimacy



CONCLUSION

To increase its legitimacy, the PNAC should include patient representatives, ensure the timely publication of its discussion transcripts, and incorporate cost-effectiveness analysis in its health technology assessments. This case study thus underscores the significance of inclusivity, transparency, and attendance to value-for-money considerations in healthcare resource allocation processes.

RELATED LITERATURE

Assor, Yael, and Dan Greenberg. 2022. "Public Legitimacy of Healthcare Resource Allocation Committees: Lessons Learned from Assessing an Israeli Case Study." *BMC Health Services Research* 22 (1): 737

Greenberg, Dan, Miriam I. Siebzehner, and Joseph S. Pliskin. 2009. "The Process of Updating the National List of Health Services in Israel: Is It Legitimate? Is It Fair?" *International Journal of Technology Assessment in Health Care* 25 (3): 255–61.