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Recognition of heart teams for TAVI by the Swiss Society of Cardiology SGK/SSC and the Swiss Society of Cardiac and Thoracic Vascular Surgery (SGHC/SSCS)

Both the SGK/SSC as well as the SGHC/SSCS endorse the Guidelines of the European Society of Cardiology ESC and the European Association for Cardio-Thoracic Surgery EACTS.

Criteria to be met by heart teams applicants for the indication of TAVI

- Heart team composition includes a cardiac surgeon, a cardiologist as well as a TAVI specialist (invasive Cardiologist). In individual cases participation of additional specialists such as an anesthesiologist, a cardiology imaging specialist, an intensive care specialist, a geriatrician, a family physician, or a coagulation specialist needs to be possible.
- Heart team meetings are to be organized by TAVI centers, i.e. centers that perform TAVI
- TAVI centers need to have a “kantonaler Leistungsauftrag/mandat de prestation cantonal” for cardiac surgery
- TAVI centers need to have a “kantonaler Leistungsauftrag/ mandat de prestation cantonal” for interventional cardiology
- TAVI centers need to transfer data of TAVIs performed to the SwissTAVI registry
- Meetings of heart teams can take place on site, virtually or hybrid
- Meetings of heart teams need to be regularly scheduled
- All patients with aortic stenosis where an intervention and/or surgery are an option need to be presented to the heart team
- At least one member of the heart team needs to know the patient
- Decisions need to be documented in a structured protocol

Process of recognition of heart teams by the Swiss Society of Cardiology SGK/SSC and the Swiss Society of Cardiac and Thoracic Vascular Surgery SGHC/SSCS

A commission installed jointly by the Swiss Society of Cardiology and the Swiss Society of Cardiac and Thoracic Vascular Surgery is responsible for recognition of heart teams for TAVI. The commission defines a process of application and ensures that the decision is transparent.

The process of recognition of a heart team is shown in Figure 1.

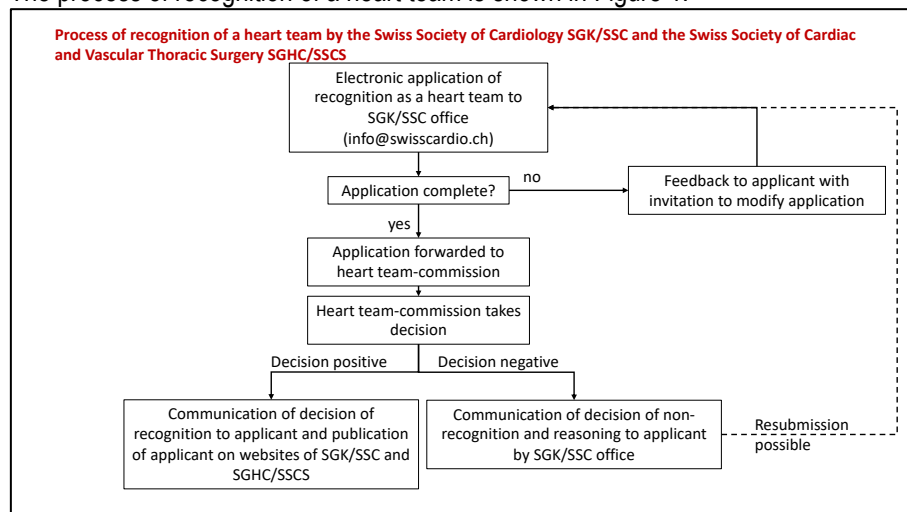


Figure 1: Process of application for recognition of heart teams for TAVI

Heart team commission

The commission is responsible for processing applications, for the publication and maintenance of a list of recognized heart teams, defining the application process, updating the application form as well as for reassessment of recognition. Also, it is responsible of submitting any changes to the ELGK/CFPP for approval.

- The heart team commission is a joint commission composed of two cardiologists, two cardiac surgeons, and an employee of the office of the SGK/SSC.
- The cardiologists need to be member of the Swiss Society of Cardiology and are appointed by the board of the SGK/SSC.
- The cardiac surgeons need to be member of the Swiss Society of Cardiac and Thoracic Vascular Surgery and are appointed by the board of the SGHC/SSCS.
- All commission members are appointed for a 4-year period, reelection is possible (by the board of each society).
- The commission will be chaired by one of its members for a period of 12 months.
- The employee of the office has no voting right and is present for the purpose of preparation, documentation, and communication of decisions of the commission. The office decides itself, whom it delegates for the task.
- Decisions of the commission are based on consensus. In the event of disagreement, the chair of the commission has the casting vote.
- A heart team whose recognition has been declined may resubmit after revision.
- Appeal is possible. Appeal authority are the joint boards of both societies.
- The heart team commission decides on the withdrawal of a recognition if institutions transfer no data to the SWISS TAVI registry after due warning.
- The heart team commission meets at least once a year.

Publication of recognized heart teams

- Once an application as a heart team is approved, the name of the applicants' institution is published on the website of the SGK/SSC and SGHC/SSCS.
- The list of recognized heart teams is publicly accessible.
- Rejected applications will not be published.
- Heart teams that are no longer active or recognized are removed from the list.

Duration of recognition

Recognition as a heart team is limited to four years.

The SGK/SSC office checks annually with the SWISS TAVI registry, if institutions of recognized heart teams have transmitted required data to the registry. The office informs the commission on the status of participation once a year. The commission may randomly check on the documentation of the heart team meetings (e.g. 5 institutions per). Every heart team will be checked once in four years. The date of re-evaluation is published on the website.

If a heart team does no longer meet the criteria or if no TAVIs are performed anymore, the heart team is responsible to inform the SGK/SSC office of this change.

Heart teams that no longer meet the criteria within the last 12 months will be reminded and, if the criteria are not met within three months, the heart team will be removed from the list of recognized centers.

Renewal of recognition

Renewal of recognition is possible upon request by the center.

In order to obtain renewal of recognition, the heart team needs to submit

- application form

- statistics on number of TAVI patients discussed by the heart team and number of patients recommended for conservative, interventional and surgical treatment respectively

The commission takes care that for any heart team for which recognition has to be renewed, random check of documentation of heart team meetings has taken place during the last recognition period.

SGK/SSC Office

The SGK/SSC Office is responsible for

- receiving applications
- checking completeness of applications
- preparing application for committee decision
- documenting committee decision
- correspondence with applicant
- publication of approved heart teams on websites
- billing the applicant
- agenda setting for the commission
- organization of at least one commission meeting per year
- to check once annually the SWISS TAVI registry data transfer completeness
- to set a deadline for non-compliant heart teams to submit the data to SWISS TAVI registry

Costs

A fee is charged for applications to be paid by the applicant. The fee covers the costs of the application process. The fee is decided upon by the heart team commission.

The fee for application and renewal of recognition is CHF 500.- payable with submission of the application.