

# A guide to NICE

*National Institute for  
Clinical Excellence*

MidCity Place  
71 High Holborn  
London  
WC1V 6NA

[www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk)

This booklet is a simple guide to the work of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE). We hope you find it useful – whatever your interest in the work of NICE.

If you have any comments on this guide, please contact the communications department at NICE:

***National Institute for  
Clinical Excellence***

MidCity Place  
71 High Holborn  
London  
WC1V 6NA  
Telephone: 020 7067 5800  
Fax: 020 7067 5801  
Email: nice@nice.nhs.uk  
Website: www.nice.org.uk

Further copies of this guide can be ordered from the NHS Response Line. Telephone 0870 1555 455 and quote reference number **N0521**. A version in Welsh and English is also available, reference number **N0202**. Mae fersiwn yn Gymraeg ac yn Saesneg ar gael hefyd, rhif cyfeirnod **N0202**.

Designed by Anytime After Nine Ltd  
Printed by Marshall Hayward Ltd

ISBN: 1-84257-593-7  
Published by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence  
April 2004

# Contents

---

<b>Section 1 – <i>General information about NICE</i></b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Section 2 – <i>Technology appraisals</i></b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Section 3 – <i>Clinical guidelines</i></b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Section 4 – <i>Interventional procedures</i></b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Section 5 – <i>Research and Development</i></b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Section 6 – <i>How does NICE make its information available?</i></b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Section 7 – <i>Quick reference section</i></b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Section 8 – <i>List of abbreviations</i></b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Section 9 – <i>Other organisations</i></b>	<b>31</b>

# Section 1

---

## General information about NICE

### What is NICE?

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) is part of the NHS. It is the independent organisation responsible for providing national guidance on treatments and care for people using the NHS in England and Wales. Its guidance is for healthcare professionals and patients and their carers to help them make decisions about treatment and healthcare.

NICE was established as a Special Health Authority in April 1999 to promote clinical excellence and the effective use of resources within the NHS.

### What are the roles and responsibilities of NICE?

Currently NICE produces guidance in three areas of health:

- the use of new and existing medicines and treatments within the NHS in England and Wales – technology appraisals
- the appropriate treatment and care of people with specific diseases and conditions within the NHS in England and Wales – clinical guidelines
- whether interventional procedures used for diagnosis or treatment are safe enough and work well enough for routine use – interventional procedures.

NICE also funds three enquiries that review information collected during day-to-day healthcare so that they can

recommend changes that will improve healthcare in the future (the investigations are known as confidential enquiries).

### Does NICE cover the whole of the UK?

No. NICE produces technology appraisal guidance and clinical guidelines for the NHS in England and Wales. NICE interventional procedures guidance, which decides whether interventional procedures are safe and work well enough for use in the NHS, covers England, Wales and Scotland. Other guidance for the NHS in Scotland is developed by NHS Quality Improvement Scotland (technology appraisals)<sup>1</sup> and the Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN)<sup>2</sup>.

The Northern Ireland Executive<sup>3</sup> is in the process of deciding who will develop guidance for the NHS in Northern Ireland, and you can find out more from the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS)<sup>4</sup>.

### How does NICE fit into the NHS?

NICE's role was set out in *The New NHS, Modern and Dependable* and *NHS Wales, Putting Patients First*. Further information can be found in *A First Class Service: Quality in the New NHS*, published by the Department of Health, and *Quality Care and Clinical Excellence*, published by the Welsh Assembly Government. Visit the Department of Health website at [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk) and the Welsh Assembly Government website at [www.wales.gov.uk](http://www.wales.gov.uk).

<sup>1</sup> For more information visit [www.nhshealthquality.org](http://www.nhshealthquality.org)

<sup>2</sup> For more information visit [www.sign.ac.uk](http://www.sign.ac.uk)

<sup>3</sup> For more information visit [www.northernireland.gov.uk](http://www.northernireland.gov.uk)

<sup>4</sup> For more information visit [www.dhsspsni.gov.uk](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk)

NICE and the National Service Frameworks (produced by the Department of Health and Welsh Assembly Government) are responsible for setting clear national standards for NHS services and treatments. The Department of Health has published a consultation document, *Standards For Better Health*<sup>5</sup>, which sets out how NHS organisations should respond to NICE guidance, and it is expected to issue final advice to the NHS in 2004.

Local NHS organisations are responsible for delivering high quality healthcare. This is done through 'clinical governance' (a framework through which NHS organisations are accountable for continuously improving standards of care), which is underpinned by modernised self-regulation of health professionals and continuing professional education. The Healthcare Commission, operational from April 2004, is responsible for monitoring progress, and you can find out more about its work at [www.healthcarecommission.org.uk](http://www.healthcarecommission.org.uk).

The English<sup>6</sup> and Welsh<sup>7</sup> 10-year plans for the NHS set out measures to put patients and people at the heart of the health service. The plans include a number of new agencies that work with NICE, including the Modernisation Agency<sup>8</sup>, which plays a crucial role in ensuring that commitments are translated into reality. The Agency helps NHS staff and NHS organisations such as NHS Trusts and Primary Care Trusts to improve services for patients.

In addition, measures have been brought in to give more power to frontline staff and patients in the NHS with the aim of fostering a new patient-centred culture.

<sup>5</sup> For more information visit [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk)

<sup>6</sup> The NHS Plan, July 2000

<sup>7</sup> Improving Health in Wales, January 2001

<sup>8</sup> For more information visit [www.modern.nhs.uk](http://www.modern.nhs.uk)

The main feature of change has been to give locally based primary care organisations the role of running the NHS and improving health in their areas. This has meant abolishing the previous Health Authorities and creating new ones that serve larger areas and have a more strategic role. Primary care organisations are required to make funding and resources available to enable NICE's guidance on health treatments to be implemented.

### Why was NICE established?

All healthcare workers want to give their patients the best possible care but, in common with health professionals in other parts of the world, healthcare workers in the UK face two major problems.

- The rate of scientific and clinical discovery is so fast that it is hard for individuals to stay at the leading edge of knowledge.
- The demand for healthcare is greater than the resources available, for a number of reasons. These include: past successes; the use of new treatments without adequate evidence of how well they work, or how well they work in relation to how much they cost; delay in introducing new treatments (even when they have been shown to be clinically effective and value for money); carrying on doing things even though they are known not to work.

This has resulted in unacceptable variations in the quality of care available for patients in different parts of the country (so-called 'postcode prescribing').

NICE was established to produce clear national guidance as a part of the process for improving the quality of healthcare across England and Wales.

## Who chooses the topics for NICE's work programme?

The Department of Health and the Welsh Assembly Government are responsible for selecting the topics for the NICE technology appraisal and guideline programmes. Full details of the process they follow can be found on the Department of Health website at [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk).

## What impact does NICE have on the NHS and health professionals?

Once NICE guidance is published, health professionals are expected to take it fully into account when exercising their clinical judgement. However, NICE guidance does not override the individual responsibility of health professionals to make appropriate decisions according to the circumstances of the individual patient in consultation with the patient and/or their guardian or carer. For example, if an individual patient was allergic to a recommended drug it would be appropriate for their health professional to prescribe an alternative.

Since January 2002, the NHS has been obliged to provide funding and resources for medicines and treatments recommended by NICE through its technology appraisals work programme. The NHS normally has 3 months from the date of publication of each technology appraisal guidance to provide funding and resources. Treatment will only be provided if a doctor or nurse, after discussing the options with the patient, thinks that this is the right choice for that patient.

Local health communities should review their existing management of clinical conditions against NICE guidelines when they are published. The review should consider the

resources required to implement the recommendations set out in the guideline, the people and processes involved, and the timeline over which full implementation is envisaged. It is in the interests of patients that the implementation timeline is as short as possible. Relevant local clinical guidelines, care pathways and protocols should be reviewed in the light of the NICE guideline and revised accordingly.

Local NHS organisations are expected to meet the costs of medicines and treatments recommended by NICE out of their general annual allocations.

## What impact does NICE have on patients?

NICE will provide authoritative, timely advice on the effectiveness of potential treatments and the best clinical practice, and make sure that this information reaches patients and the NHS. It impacts on patients by standardising access to healthcare across the country, creating national, rather than regional, standards of treatment.

## What impact does NICE have on the healthcare industries (manufacturers of medicines and devices)?

NICE is asked to look at particular drugs and devices where the availability of the drug or device varies across England and Wales or where there is confusion or uncertainty over the value of a drug or device. To end this uncertainty, NICE makes a national decision over its use.

NICE does not have responsibility for the licensing of drugs or devices. In the UK, drugs and devices are licensed by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA)<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> For more information visit [www.mhra.gov.uk](http://www.mhra.gov.uk)

Most licensed drugs and devices are assessed at a local level within the NHS, through local prescribing arrangements, to determine whether local hospitals and primary care organisations will use them.

If a drug or device is currently being appraised by NICE, NHS organisations should make decisions on its use locally, using their usual arrangements.

Once the guidance has been issued by NICE, it replaces the local decisions and promotes equal access for patients across England and Wales.

## Section 2

---

### *Technology appraisals*

#### What are technology appraisals?

Technology appraisals are recommendations on the use of new and existing medicines and treatments within the NHS in England and Wales, such as:

- medicines
- medical devices (for example, hearing aids or inhalers)
- diagnostic techniques (tests used to identify diseases)
- surgical procedures (for example, repairing hernias)
- health promotion activities (for example, ways of helping people with diabetes manage their condition).

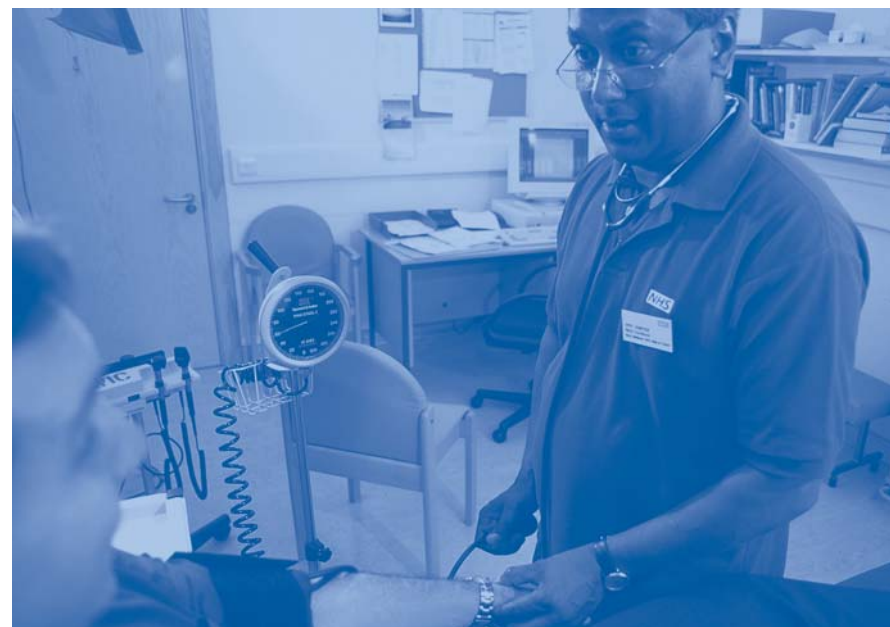
NICE recommendations are based on a review of clinical and economic evidence. Clinical evidence measures how well the medicine or treatment works, and economic

evidence, put simply, is a measure of how well the medicine or treatment works in relation to how much it costs – does it represent good value for money? NICE acknowledges that something can be both expensive and good value for money.

#### What are technology appraisals for?

NICE is asked to look at particular drugs and devices where the availability of the drug or device varies across England and Wales or where there is confusion or uncertainty over its value. To end this uncertainty, NICE makes a national decision on its use.

Since January 2002, the NHS has been legally obliged to provide funding and resources for medicines and treatments recommended by NICE as a part of its technology appraisals programme (see page 6).



## What happens before the appraisal process begins?

Technologies for appraisal are referred to NICE by the Secretary of State for Health and the Welsh Assembly Government.

Before a topic is formally referred, NICE works with the Department of Health and the Welsh Assembly Government to develop a document known as a 'scope' for the appraisal. The scope sets out the boundaries for the appraisal and the questions that need to be asked.

NICE identifies organisations that might participate in the appraisal as 'consultees' or 'commentators' (see next section) if the topic is formally referred. These organisations include the manufacturer(s) of the technology and groups that represent patients or carers or healthcare professionals. They have an opportunity to comment on a draft version of the scope and to attend a 'scoping workshop' to discuss the draft scope and other issues concerning the potential appraisal. A final scope is produced, taking into account the comments on the draft and the discussions at the workshop, and submitted to the Department of Health and the Welsh Assembly Government for a decision on whether the technology appraisal is suitable for formal referral to NICE.

## Technology appraisals – the process

The appraisal process begins after a technology has been formally referred to NICE by the Secretary of State for Health and the Welsh Assembly Government. It is not possible to set absolute timescales for all stages of the process, but 54 weeks is the minimum period from the start to the end of the appeal period.

An appraisal starts when NICE invites consultee and commentator organisations to participate. Consultee organisations include national groups representing patients and/or carers, the bodies representing healthcare professionals, and the manufacturers of the technology. Consultees are invited to submit evidence during the appraisal and to comment on the appraisal documents. Commentator organisations comment on the documents but are not asked to submit evidence – examples are the manufacturers of the products with which the technology is being compared, NHS Quality Improvement Scotland and research groups working in the area.

Through the NHS Research and Development Health Technology Assessment Programme, NICE commissions an independent academic centre to review the published evidence on the technology and prepare an 'assessment report'. Consultees and commentators are invited to comment on the report. The assessment report and the comments on it are then drawn together with written submissions from consultees in a document called the evaluation report.

The independent Appraisal Committee meets to consider the evaluation report and verbal evidence from nominated clinical experts and patients and/or carers. The Committee makes preliminary recommendations based on all the evidence in a document called the Appraisal Consultation Document (ACD). Consultees and commentators receive a copy of this, and it is also posted on the NICE website.

The Committee meets again to consider the comments submitted on the ACD, and prepares its final recommendations in a document called the Final Appraisal Determination (FAD), which is submitted to NICE for approval.

NICE sends the FAD to consultees and commentators and posts it on the website for information. Consultees can appeal against the final recommendations in the FAD. If there are no appeals, the final recommendations become the basis of the guidance that NICE issues to the NHS.

### What is the Appraisal Committee?

NICE technology appraisal recommendations are prepared by an independent committee, which includes healthcare professionals working in the NHS and people who are familiar with the issues affecting patients and carers. Although the Appraisal Committee seeks the views of organisations representing healthcare professionals, patients, carers, manufacturers and government, its advice is independent of any vested interests.



### How can I submit evidence?

Organisations representing patients, carers and healthcare professionals, manufacturers and relevant NHS organisations are invited to be involved throughout the process as consultees. During an appraisal, consultees can submit evidence to the Appraisal Committee and comment on the ACD and assessment report. Consultee organisations representing patients/carers or healthcare professionals can nominate clinical specialists and patient experts to present their personal views directly to the Committee. Consultees can appeal against the final recommendations (the FAD).

Information about the appraisal, including the assessment report and the ACD and FAD, is posted on the NICE website during the process.

Once the Committee's initial recommendations are published on the NICE website (in the form of an ACD), members of the public and individual health professionals can send their own feedback directly to NICE.

To support patient involvement in the development of its guidance, NICE has established a Patient Involvement Unit (the PIU). The PIU provides advice to NICE on patient and carer involvement, and support and training to patients and carers who are involved in the development of appraisal guidance.

### What happens if an appeal is made?

As a part of the guidance development process for technology appraisals, NICE offers consultee organisations the opportunity to appeal against the final



recommendations (the FAD). If there are no appeals, or if appeals are heard but not upheld, then the final recommendations become the guidance that is sent by NICE to the NHS. If an appeal is upheld, NICE takes the course of action appropriate to the findings of the Panel. Changes may be made to the proposed wording or the Appraisal Committee may be asked to reconsider the evidence in the light of the Panel's comments.

Once guidance has been published, there is no further right of appeal. However, the guidance is reviewed – the length of time between publication and the date for consideration of a review depends on how quickly new evidence is likely to become available.

### Further information

NICE has produced a series of documents explaining its technology appraisal process. *Guide to the Technology Appraisal Process* (reference N0514) provides an overview, while the following documents focus on more specific aspects of the process:

- *Guide to the Methods of Technology Appraisal* (reference N0515)
- *Contributing to a Technology Appraisal: A Guide for Patient/Carer Groups* (reference N0516)
- *Contributing to a Technology Appraisal: A Guide for Healthcare Professional Groups* (reference N0517)
- *Contributing to a Technology Appraisal: A Guide for Manufacturers and Sponsors* (reference N0518)
- *Contributing to a Technology Appraisal: A Guide for NHS Organisations* (reference N0519)
- *Appraisal Process: Guidance for Appellants* (reference N0520).

These documents can be downloaded from the NICE website or ordered from the NHS Response Line (telephone 0870 1555 455) – quote the reference number for the booklet you want.

### Where can I find out about forthcoming appraisals?

For further information on forthcoming appraisals, please visit the NICE website at [www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk) and click on **Our guidance** and then **Appraisals in development**.

NICE also produces a monthly e-newsletter, which gives details of forthcoming technology appraisals. To subscribe to the e-newsletter free of charge, please visit the NICE website at [www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk) to register your details.

### Where can I get a copy of NICE guidance?

You can download copies of completed NICE guidance from the NICE website. Alternatively, you can phone the NHS Response Line on 0870 1555 455 and ask for a printed copy.

## Section 3

---

### Clinical guidelines

#### What are NICE clinical guidelines?

Clinical guidelines are recommendations on the appropriate treatment and care of people with specific diseases and conditions within the NHS in England and Wales. They are

based on the best available evidence. Guidelines help healthcare professionals in their work, but they do not replace their knowledge and skills.

### What are clinical guidelines for?

Good clinical guidelines can change the process of healthcare and improve outcomes. For example, well-constructed and up-to-date clinical guidelines:

- provide recommendations for the treatment and care of people by health professionals
- can be used to develop standards to assess the clinical practice of health professionals
- can be used in the education and training of health professionals
- can help patients to make informed decisions, and improve communication between the patient and health professional.

### How does NICE develop its clinical guidelines?

The guideline topics referred to NICE by the Secretary of State for Health and the Welsh Assembly Government are published on the NICE website. Stakeholder organisations are then invited to register their interest in individual guidelines through the website.

The boundaries of the guideline – what it will and will not cover – are drawn up by the National Collaborating Centre (NCC) commissioned by NICE to develop the guideline. They are written up in a document called the scope. NICE, registered stakeholders and an independent Guideline Review Panel have input into the development of the scope.

The NCC then establishes a Guideline Development Group comprising health professionals, lay representatives and technical experts. This Group assesses the evidence available on the guideline topic and makes recommendations based on this evidence. These form the core of the guideline.

Registered stakeholders have two opportunities to comment on the draft guideline, which is posted on the NICE website during the consultation periods. The Guideline Review Panel also reviews the guideline and checks that stakeholders' comments have been addressed. Following the final consultation period, the Guideline Development Group finalises the recommendations and the NCC produces the final documents. These are then submitted to NICE. NICE formally approves the guideline and issues its guidance to the NHS in England and Wales.

### What are the National Collaborating Centres?

NICE has established a number of National Collaborating Centres (NCCs) to harness the expertise of the Royal Medical Colleges, professional bodies and patient/carer organisations when developing clinical guidelines. Each NCC is a professionally led group with the experience and resources to develop guidance for the NHS on behalf of NICE.

Currently, the NCCs are the:

- NCC for Acute Care
- NCC for Cancer
- NCC for Chronic Conditions
- NCC for Nursing and Supportive Care
- NCC for Mental Health
- NCC for Primary Care
- NCC for Women's and Children's Health.

For details of the member organisations of the NCCs, visit the NICE website at [www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk).

### What are the Guideline Development Groups?

An NCC sets up an independent Guideline Development Group to develop each guideline. The members of the Guideline Development Group have experience and expertise relevant to the guideline topic. They include healthcare professionals and patient/carer representatives. The Guideline Development Group looks at the evidence available and considers comments made on two draft versions of the guideline issued for consultation before making final recommendations.

There are four versions of each guideline:

- the full guideline, which contains all of the evidence considered in developing the guideline
- the NICE guideline, which contains recommendations for the NHS
- the quick reference guide, which contains the key recommendations of the NICE guideline – it is this version that is printed and sent to the NHS
- information for the public, which is written for people without specialist medical knowledge.

The NICE guideline, the quick reference guide and the information for the public are published by NICE; the full version of the guideline is published by the National Collaborating Centre, and is also available from the NICE website.

### What are Guideline Review Panels?

NICE has established a number of Guideline Review Panels, each consisting of four or five members, including a chair and a deputy. Each Guideline Review Panel is aligned with one of the NCCs that manages the development of clinical guidelines for NICE. The Panels are responsible for validating the final full guideline, paying particular attention to the guideline developers' responses to comments received during consultation.

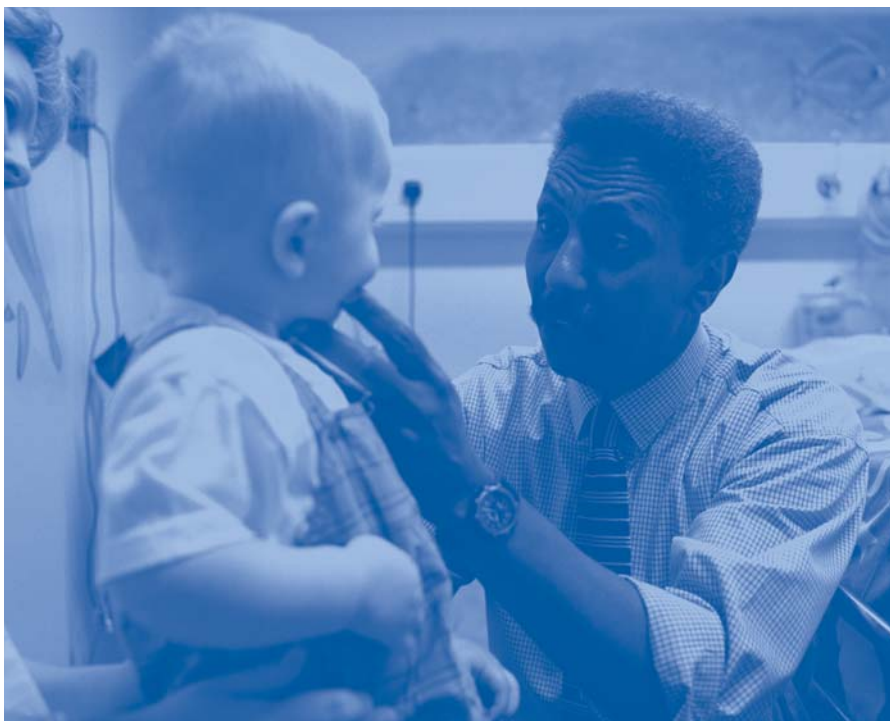
### How can I get involved?

NICE lists the guideline topics in its work programme on its website. National organisations representing patients and carers and healthcare professionals involved in their care are then able to register their interest in particular topics. These groups, together with representative NHS organisations, are consulted throughout the guideline development process. They are involved at the beginning of the process when the scope of the guideline is being established and in commenting on the draft versions of the guideline. Groups that have registered an interest are invited to nominate people to join the Guideline Development Group.

To support patient involvement in the development of its guidelines, NICE has established a Patient Involvement Unit (the PIU). The PIU provides advice to NICE and the NCCs on patient and carer involvement, and support and training to patients and carers who are involved in Guideline Development Groups.

## Further information

NICE has produced two documents describing its guideline development process. The first is an overview of the process, which explains what happens and how stakeholder organisations can become involved. It is called *The Guideline Development Process: An Overview for Stakeholders, the Public and the NHS*, and it can be downloaded from the NICE website. For a printed copy, call the NHS Response Line (telephone 0870 1555 455). The reference number for the booklet is N0472.



The second document explains the methods used to develop NICE guidelines. It is a working document and has been developed principally as a resource for the NCCs and guideline developers, although it may be of interest to

anyone who wants more detail on NICE processes or the development of health guidance in general. *Guideline Development Methods: Information for National Collaborating Centres and Guideline Developers* is available from the NICE website. The chapters are updated at regular intervals so that they continue to reflect current practice.

## Where can I find out about forthcoming guidelines?

For further information on forthcoming guidelines, please visit the NICE website at [www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk) and click on **Our guidance** and then **Guidelines in development**.

NICE also produces a monthly e-newsletter, which gives details of forthcoming clinical guidelines. To subscribe to the e-newsletter free of charge, please visit the NICE website at [www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk) to register your details.

## Where can I get a copy of NICE guidance?

You can download copies of completed NICE guidance from the website. Alternatively, you can phone the NHS Response Line on 0870 1555 455 and ask for a printed copy of the quick reference guide or information for the public versions of the guidance. The NICE guidelines are only available in an electronic format and can be downloaded from the NICE website.

## Section 4

---

### *Interventional procedures*

#### What is an interventional procedure?

NICE makes recommendations about whether interventional procedures used for diagnosis or treatment are safe enough and work well enough for routine use. An interventional procedure is a procedure used for diagnosis or treatment that involves one of the following:

- making a cut or a hole to gain access to the inside of a patient's body – for example, when carrying out an operation or inserting a tube into a blood vessel
- gaining access to a body cavity (such as the digestive system, lungs, womb or bladder) without cutting into the body – for example, examining or carrying out treatment on the inside of the stomach using an instrument inserted via the mouth
- using electromagnetic radiation (which includes X-rays, lasers, gamma-rays and ultraviolet light) – for example, using a laser to treat eye problems.

#### What is this guidance for?

The aim of NICE's interventional procedures programme is to protect the safety of patients and to support health professionals, healthcare organisations and the NHS as a whole in the process of introducing procedures. Unlike technology appraisals and clinical guidelines, NICE interventional procedures cover Scotland as well as England and Wales.

Many of the procedures that NICE investigates are new, but NICE also looks at more established procedures if there is uncertainty about their safety or how well they work.

By reviewing evidence, facilitating data collection and analysis, and providing guidance on how safe procedures are and how well they work, NICE enables clinical innovation to be responsibly managed within the NHS.

#### What is the Interventional Procedures Advisory Committee?

NICE interventional procedure recommendations are prepared by an independent committee, which includes healthcare professionals working in the NHS and people who are familiar with the issues affecting patients and carers. The Committee takes advice from Specialist Advisors nominated by healthcare professional bodies whose members are involved in the use of interventional procedures.

#### How can I get involved?

Any individual or organisation can notify NICE about procedures that are being performed or are likely to be performed within the NHS. Procedures are most commonly notified by clinicians; they are responsible for notifying NICE when considering use of a procedure that they have not used before, or that they have only used outside the NHS. You can notify a procedure, or check whether a procedure has already been notified, by visiting the NICE website.

Each piece of interventional procedures guidance is published on the NICE website for a 4-week consultation

period. Professionals, patients and any other interested person or group can 'express an interest' in a procedure via the NICE website. Everyone who expresses an interest will be informed by email when consultation begins and will be able to submit comments via the NICE website or by post.

### Where can I find out more about interventional procedures?

For further information on interventional procedures, please visit the NICE website at [www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk) and click on **Our guidance** and then **Interventional procedures**.

## Section 5

---

### *Research and Development*

The NICE Research and Development (R&D) programme was set up in 2003, incorporating the existing confidential enquiries. The aim of the programme is to promote and commission research that will support the pursuit of excellence within the NHS. The programme will focus on:

- working with the research community, patients and other partners to explain and promote NICE's research needs
- using research to improve the methods that NICE uses to develop guidance
- using research to investigate how NICE can help the NHS implement and apply NICE guidance, working in collaboration with the national confidential enquiries (see page 25).

In December 2003 the Institute published a draft research

and development strategy, outlining proposals for how the programme will work, for consultation. This strategy is being revised in the light of comments received during the consultation period and will be presented to the Institute's Board in May 2004. For further information on the NICE R&D Programme please visit the NICE website at [www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk) and click on **How we work** and then **Research and Development**.

### What is a confidential enquiry?

NICE oversees three confidential enquiries that review information collected during day-to-day healthcare so that it can recommend changes that will improve healthcare in the future.

Each undertakes research in different areas.

- The Confidential Enquiry into Maternal and Child Health (CEMACH) researches the care of babies, children and mothers.
- The National Confidential Enquiry into Patient Outcome and Death (NCEPOD) examines the outcomes of patients who have received a surgical or medical intervention.
- The National Confidential Inquiry into Suicide and Homicide (NCISH) examines suicides and homicides by people using mental health services.

### What is this guidance for?

The confidential enquiries publish reports summarising key findings and recommendations arising from the information they gather. They aim to identify changes in practice that might improve the quality of clinical practice and reduce the number of deaths.

## How can I find out more information on the confidential enquiries?

You can access further information about the confidential enquiries by logging on to the following websites:

- Confidential Enquiry into Maternal and Child Health (CEMACH) – [www.cemach.org.uk](http://www.cemach.org.uk)
- National Confidential Enquiry into Patient Outcome and Death (NCEPOD) – [www.ncepod.org.uk/](http://www.ncepod.org.uk/)
- National Confidential Inquiry into Suicide and Homicide by People with Mental Illness (NCISH) – [www.national-confidential-inquiry.ac.uk/nci/index.cfm](http://www.national-confidential-inquiry.ac.uk/nci/index.cfm)

## Section 6

---

### *How does NICE make its information available?*

On the fourth Wednesday of each month NICE sends completed guidance to a core list of people in the NHS (for example, chief executives of NHS organisations). NICE also sends copies to health professionals working in the clinical or medical area covered by the guidance. All guidance is published on NICE's website ([www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk)) as it is released. Healthcare professionals, patients and members of the public can register on the NICE website to receive emails that tell them when new guidance is published.

NICE ensures that relevant journalists are kept informed about the guidance it issues so that decisions can be publicised through the broadcast and print media.

NICE also produces a monthly e-newsletter, which gives details of forthcoming guidance. To subscribe to the e-newsletter free of charge, please visit the NICE website and register your details.

You can download copies of completed NICE guidance from the website at [www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk) or obtain a printed copy by phoning the NHS Response Line on 0870 1555 455.

In addition, NICE makes its guidance available through the following channels:

- PRODIGY – the NHS's decision-support software for primary care prescribers ([www.prodigy.nhs.uk/](http://www.prodigy.nhs.uk/))
- NHS Direct online ([www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk/index.asp](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk/index.asp))
- the National Electronic Library for Health ([www.nelh.nhs.uk/](http://www.nelh.nhs.uk/))
- patient/carer organisations
- partnerships with other 'closed' websites
- professional journals and other places where health professionals would seek information.

Every 6 months, a compilation of all NICE guidance is published and circulated to healthcare professionals. It can also be downloaded from the NICE website. The compilation is currently being reviewed and the first revised compilation will be published in autumn 2004.

## Section 7

---

### Quick reference section

#### Contacting NICE

Postal address:  
NICE  
MidCity Place  
71 High Holborn  
London WC1V 6NA

Telephone: 020 7067 5800  
Fax: 020 7067 5801

Email: nice@nice.nhs.uk  
Website: www.nice.org.uk

#### How to order copies of NICE guidance

Visit the NICE website ([www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk)) or call the NHS Response Line on: 0870 1555 455 (fax: 01623 724 524), or email orders to [doh@prolog.uk.com](mailto:doh@prolog.uk.com).

For all other queries, please contact NICE (contact details above).

#### Who's who at NICE

##### Non-Executive Directors

Sir Michael Rawlins – *Chairman*  
Dr Susanne Lawrence OBE – *Vice Chairman*

Professor Leon Fine  
Frederick George  
Mercy Jeyasingham  
Roy Luff OBE  
Mary McClarey  
Professor Helen Roberts  
Mark Taylor

##### Executive Directors

Andrew Dillon – *Chief Executive*  
Professor Peter Littlejohns – *Clinical Director*  
Andrea Sutcliffe – *Planning & Resources Director*

##### Committee Chairs

Professor David Barnett – *Chair of Appraisal Committee*  
Professor Bruce Campbell – *Chair of Interventional Procedures Advisory Committee*  
Professor Sir Michael Marmot – *Chair of Research & Development Committee*

**Partners Council** – The Partners Council is appointed by the Secretary of State. It has a statutory duty to meet annually to review the Institute's Annual Report. The Partners Council also provides a forum for the exchange of ideas, concepts and future plans. Members include patients and representatives of patient-focused organisations, professional organisations and relevant healthcare industries.

**Citizens Council** – The Citizens Council brings the views of the public to NICE decision making about guidance for treatments and care in the NHS. Challenging value questions are addressed by a 30-strong group of men and women drawn from all walks of life.



## Section 8

---

### *List of abbreviations*

<b>ACD</b>	Appraisal Consultation Document
<b>CEMACH</b>	Confidential Enquiry into Maternal and Child Health
<b>CHAI</b>	Commission for Healthcare Audit and Inspection
<b>FAD</b>	Final Appraisal Determination
<b>NCC</b>	National Collaborating Centre
<b>NCEPOD</b>	National Confidential Enquiry into Patient Outcomes and Death
<b>NCISH</b>	National Confidential Inquiry into Suicide and Homicide by People with Mental Illness
<b>NICE</b>	National Institute for Clinical Excellence
<b>PIU</b>	Patient Involvement Unit

## Section 9

---

### *Other organisations*

Contact details for other organisations are as follows:

#### **Customer Service Centre Department of Health**

Richmond House, 79 Whitehall, London SW1A 2NS  
Tel: 020 7210 4850  
Text phone (minicom): 020 7210 5025  
Email: [dhmail@doh.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:dhmail@doh.gsi.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk)

#### **Welsh Assembly Government**

National Assembly for Wales,  
Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NQ  
Tel: 029 20 825111  
Email: [health.enquiries@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:health.enquiries@wales.gsi.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.wales.gov.uk](http://www.wales.gov.uk)

#### **Healthcare Commission**

Finsbury Tower, 103–105 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8TG  
Tel: 020 7448 9200  
Email: [feedback@healthcarecommission.org.uk](mailto:feedback@healthcarecommission.org.uk)  
Website: [www.healthcarecommission.org.uk](http://www.healthcarecommission.org.uk)

#### **Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA)**

Information Centre, MCA, 10-2 Market Towers,  
1 Nine Elms Lane, Vauxhall, London SW8 5NQ  
Tel: 020 7273 0000  
Email: [info@mhra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:info@mhra.gsi.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.mhra.gov.uk](http://www.mhra.gov.uk)

### NHS Modernisation Agency

Richmond House, 79 Whitehall, London SW1A 2NS

Fax: 020 7210 4904

Website: [www.modern.nhs.uk](http://www.modern.nhs.uk)

### NHS Quality Improvement Scotland

Delta House, 50 West Nile Street, Glasgow G1 2NP

Tel: 0141 225 6999

Website: [www.nhshealthquality.org](http://www.nhshealthquality.org)

### Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN)

Royal College of Physicians, 9 Queen Street,

Edinburgh EH2 1JQ

Tel: 0131 225 7324

Email: [sign@rcpe.ac.uk](mailto:sign@rcpe.ac.uk)

Website: [www.sign.ac.uk](http://www.sign.ac.uk)

### Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS)

Castle Buildings, Stormont, Belfast BT4 3SJ,

Northern Ireland

Tel: 028 9052 0500

Website: [www.dhsspsni.gov.uk](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk)

