

# NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CARE EXCELLENCE

## NICE guidelines Equality impact assessment

### Spondyloarthritis: diagnosis and management of spondyloarthritis.

The impact on equality has been assessed during guidance development according to the principles of the NICE equality policy.

#### 4.0 Final guideline (to be completed by the Developer before GE consideration of final guideline)

4.1 Have any additional potential equality issues been raised during the consultation, and, if so, how has the Committee addressed them?

One stakeholder has raised concerns around the recommendation to screen all individuals with suspected axial spondyloarthritis using X-rays noting that the likelihood of true positive findings in young people and women was low. The GDG discussed and agreed to amend the recommendation to clarify that X ray should not be used as an initial assessment tool in people with an immature skeleton on the basis that they were likely to be offered further opportunities for assessment by X ray once their skeleton had matured. However the GDG agreed that women should still be offered X ray as part of the initial diagnostic pathway for axial spondyloarthritis given that the removal of X ray analysis would exclude the possible diagnosis of ankylosing spondylitis and subsequent access to treatment which is currently only approved for radiographic, but not non-radiographic, axial spondyloarthritis.

4.2 If the recommendations have changed after consultation, are there any recommendations that make it more difficult in practice for a specific group to access services compared with other groups? If so, what are the barriers to, or difficulties with, access for the specific group?

The amendment to the recommendation noted above does not make it more difficult for specific groups to access services. Preventing people with immature skeletons access to X ray assessment is justified due to the low rate of true

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positives and high rate of false positives arising from X ray assessment in this group.

4.3 If the recommendations have changed after consultation, is there potential for the recommendations to have an adverse impact on people with disabilities because of something that is a consequence of the disability?

No

4.4 If the recommendations have changed after consultation, are there any recommendations or explanations that the Committee could make to remove or alleviate barriers to, or difficulties with, access to services identified in questions 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3, or otherwise fulfil NICE's obligations to advance equality?

No the recommendation to exclude people with immature skeletons from accessing X ray assessment is for clinical reasons rather than barriers or difficulties with access to services.

4.5 Have the Committee's considerations of equality issues been described in the final guideline, and, if so, where?

Yes the rationale for the change in recommendations has been described in the relevant linking evidence to recommendations table.

Updated by Developer Susan Spiers, Guideline Lead

Date 21<sup>st</sup> November 2016

Approved by NICE quality assurance lead Sarah Willett, Guideline Lead

Date 25 January 2017