

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CARE EXCELLENCE

QUALITY STANDARD TOPIC OVERVIEW

1 Quality standard title

Winter deaths: preventing excess winter deaths

2 Introduction

2.1 *NICE quality standards*

NICE quality standards are a concise set of prioritised statements designed to drive measurable quality improvements within a particular area of health or care.

The standards are derived from high-quality guidance, such as that from NICE or [accredited](#) by NICE. They are developed independently by NICE, in collaboration with health, public health and social care practitioners, their partners and service users. Information on priority areas, people's experience of using services, safety issues, equality and cost impact are considered during the development process.

NICE quality standards are central to supporting the Government's vision for a health and social care system that is focused on delivering the best possible outcomes for people who use services, as detailed in the [Health and Social Care Act \(2012\)](#).

The quality standard development process is described in detail on the [NICE website](#).

2.2 *This topic overview*

This topic overview describes core elements of the quality standard. These include the population and topic to be covered, key source guidance to be used to underpin potential quality statements, any related quality standards,

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published current practice information and national or routine indicators and performance measures.

If the source guidance is not NICE guidance, it should meet the minimum quality criteria defined in NICE's [accreditation programme](#).

3 This quality standard

This quality standard is expected to publish in March 2016.

3.1 Population and topic to be covered

This quality standard will cover the prevention of excess winter deaths. The quality standard covers everyone, however, some groups are more vulnerable to the effects of cold, including:

- people with cardiovascular conditions
- people with respiratory conditions (in particular, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and childhood asthma)
- people with mental health conditions
- people with disabilities
- older people (65 and older)
- households with young children (from newborn to school age)
- pregnant women
- people on a low income
- people who are homeless
- people with addictions.

The prevention and management of influenza is not covered by this quality standard because an influenza quality standard will be produced.

3.2 Key development sources (NICE and NICE-accredited sources)

Primary source

- [Excess winter deaths and morbidity and the health risks associated with cold homes](#) (2015) NICE guideline NG6

Other sources that may be used

- None

Key policy documents, reports and national audits

Relevant policy documents, reports and national audits will be used to inform the development of the quality standard.

- Children's Society (2015) [Show some warmth: exposing the damaging impact of energy debt on children](#)
- Department of Energy and Climate Change (2015) [Cutting the cost of keeping warm: A fuel poverty strategy for England](#)
- Children's Society (2014) [Behind cold doors: the chilling reality for children in poverty](#)
- Local Government Association (2014) [Healthy homes, healthy lives](#)
- Office for National Statistics (2014) [Excess winter mortality in England and Wales 2013/14 \(provisional\) and 2012/13 \(final\)](#)
- Public Health England (2014) [Cold weather plan for England 2014; protecting health and reducing harm from cold weather](#)
- Public Health England (2014) [Local action on health inequalities: fuel poverty and cold home-related health problems](#)
- UK Health Forum (2014) [Fuel poverty: how to improve health and wellbeing through action on affordable warmth](#)
- UK Health Forum (2014) [Fuel poverty: tackling cold homes and ill health: a guide for primary care](#)
- British Medical Association (2013) [Beating the effects of winter pressures: Briefing Paper](#)

- Department for Energy and Climate Change (2013) [Fuel poverty: a framework for future action](#)
- Economic and Social Research Council (2013) [The impoverishment of the UK: PSE UK first results: living standards](#)
- Institute for Public Policy Research (2013) [Help to heat: a solution to the affordability crisis in energy](#)
- Ofgem (2013) [Consumer vulnerability strategy](#)
- Strategic Society (2013) [Cold enough: excess winter deaths, winter fuel payments and the UK's problem with the cold](#)
- Age UK (2012) [The cost of cold: why we need to protect the health of older people in winter](#)
- Barnados (2012) [Priced out: the plight of low income families and young people living in fuel poverty](#)
- Friends of the Earth and the Marmot Review Team (2011) [The health impacts of cold homes and fuel poverty](#)
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2011) [Tackling fuel poverty during the transition to a low-carbon economy](#)
- Local Government Association (2011) [Warm and healthy homes: how councils are helping householders improve the energy efficiency of their homes](#)

3.3 Related NICE quality standards

Published

- [Asthma](#) (2013) NICE quality standard QS25
- [Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease](#) (2011) NICE quality standard QS10

In development

- None

Future quality standards

This quality standard will be developed in the context of all quality standards referred to NICE, including the following quality standards scheduled for future development:

- Falls prevention
- Internal air: health effects

The full list of quality standard topics referred to NICE is available from the [quality standard topic library](#) on the NICE website.

4 Existing indicators

- Department of Health (2014) [Public Health Outcomes Framework 2013 to 2016](#) 1.17 Fuel poverty
- Department of Health (2014) [Public Health Outcomes Framework 2013 to 2016](#) 4.3 Mortality rate from causes considered preventable
- Department of Health (2014) [Public Health Outcomes Framework 2013 to 2016](#) 4.15 Excess winter deaths

5 Further information

See the NICE website for more information about [NICE quality standards](#) and the [progress of this quality standard](#).