

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CLINICAL EXCELLENCE

# PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDANCE

## DRAFT SCOPE

This is the scope for one of four pieces of NICE guidance addressing the prevention of unintentional injuries among children and young people aged under 15:

1. Preventing unintentional injuries among under 15s in the home. The subject of this scope. (It will be developed using the public health intervention process with publication expected April 2010.)
2. Preventing unintentional road injuries among under 15s. It will focus on reducing vehicle speeds. (The guidance will be developed using the public health intervention process with publication expected April 2010.)
3. Preventing unintentional injuries among under 15s in the external environment. It is expected to cover the sports and leisure environment. (The guidance will be developed using the public health intervention process with publication expected October 2010.) A scope will be produced for this guidance in early 2009.
4. Strategies to prevent unintentional injuries among under 15s. It will focus on strategies, policies and national programmes. (The guidance will be developed using the public health programme process with publication expected October 2010).

## 1 Guidance title

Preventing unintentional injuries from fire, hot fluids, electric sockets and heat-generating appliances in the home among children and young people aged under 15.

### 1.1 Short title

Preventing unintentional injuries among under 15s in the home.

## 2 Background

- a) The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) has been asked by the Department of Health (DH) to develop guidance on public health interventions aimed at preventing unintentional injuries in the home among those aged under 15.
- b) NICE public health guidance supports the preventive aspects of relevant national service frameworks (NSFs), where they exist. If it is published after an NSF has been issued, the guidance effectively updates it. Specifically, in this case, the guidance will support the NSF on children, young people and maternity services (DH 2004a).
- c) This guidance will also support the following public service agreements (PSAs):
  - PSA target 3 - Fire (s) (Communities and Local Government 2005).
  - PSA 12: Improve the health and wellbeing of children and young people (HM Government 2008a).
  - PSA 13: Improving children and young people's safety (HM Government 2008b).

- d) This guidance will support a number of related policy documents including:
- 'Better safe than sorry: preventing unintentional injury to children' (Audit Commission and Healthcare Commission 2007)
  - 'Choosing health – making healthy choices easier' (DH 2004b)
  - 'Every child matters: change for children' (HM Government 2004)
  - 'Fire and rescue service national framework 2008–2011' (Communities and Local Government 2008)
  - 'Preventing accidental injuries: priorities for action. Report to the Chief Medical Officer from the Accidental Injury Task Force' (DH 2002)
  - 'Saving lives: our healthier nation' (DH 1999)
  - 'Staying safe: action plan' (Department for Children, Schools and Families 2008)
  - 'Tackling health inequalities: a programme for action' (DH 2003)
  - 'The children's plan: building brighter futures' (Department for Children, Schools and Families 2007)
  - 'Working together to safeguard children' (HM Government 2006).
- e) This guidance will provide recommendations for good practice, based on the best available evidence of effectiveness, including cost effectiveness. It is aimed at professionals, commissioners and managers with public health as part of their remit working within the NHS, local authorities and the wider public, private, voluntary and community sectors. It is particularly aimed at primary care trusts, environmental health, education, children's services, police, fire and rescue services and youth/sports/cultural/social clubs. It will also be of interest to children, young people, parents and carers.

- f) The guidance will complement and support other NICE guidance on preventing unintentional injuries among children and young people. For further details see front page and section 6.

This guidance will be developed using the NICE public health intervention process.

### 3 The need for guidance

- a) Unintentional injury is a leading cause of death among children and young people aged 1–14 years (Audit Commission and Healthcare Commission 2007); it led to 246 deaths in England and Wales in 2006 (Office for National Statistics 2008). In England alone in 2006/07, it led to over 100,000 children and young people aged under 15 being admitted to hospital (The NHS Information Centre 2007). From 2000–2002, the HASS estimates<sup>1</sup> that 84,910 injuries among children aged 0–4 and 33,596<sup>2</sup> among those aged 5–14 were caused by fire, burns and scalds (Department of Trade and Industry 2002). In 2006/07, 2176 children and young people aged under 15 were admitted to hospital as a result of ‘burns and scalds’ (The NHS Information Centre 2008)<sup>3</sup>.
- b) Each year in the UK, unintentional injury results in more than 2 million visits to accident and emergency (A&E) departments by children. Half of these injuries occur at home and many are the result of a fire in the home. Approximately 50 children in Great Britain die annually as a result of a fire in the home and many more are injured from burns and scalds (Audit Commission and Healthcare Commission 2007).

<sup>1</sup> The HASS/LASS data are derived from a sample of admissions to 16–18 hospital accident and emergency departments.

<sup>2</sup> HASS defined occurrences of incidences from fire, burns and scalds as ‘Thermal effect’. ‘Thermal effect’ included any injury from uncontrolled fire/flames; burn by controlled fire/flame; burn by hot object/appliance; burn from explosion of gas/firework etc; burn/scald by hot liquid/steam/gas; exposure/hypothermia/cold burn; other thermal effect; unspecified thermal effect.

<sup>3</sup> This figure has been calculated utilising HES online (2006–2007) data ICD-codes X10-X14. Preventing unintentional injuries among under 15s in the home draft scope for consultation 3 November 2008–1 December 2008

- c) Unintentional injuries and deaths from fire, burns and scalds are highest among children and young people from lower socioeconomic groups. Those whose parents have never worked or who are long-term unemployed are 13.1 times more likely to die from an unintentional injury than the offspring of managers/professionals. Specifically, they are 37 times more likely to die as a result of exposure to smoke, fire or flames (Edwards et al. 2006). Residential areas with a high proportion of lower socioeconomic groups have higher rates of unintentional injury than more affluent areas. This is most marked among under 16s (and, in particular, among those under 5) (Department of Trade and Industry 2002).
- d) Most fires occur in people's homes: the death rate among inhabitants of homes with smoke alarms is 40–50% lower than for those without alarms (National Fire Protection Association 2004). A combination of smoke detectors and sprinkler systems could reduce fire-related deaths by 82% and injuries by 46% (Centre for Disease Control and Prevention 2001). A lack of close supervision is the most frequent reason for a burn or scald injury among children and young people – at least 50% can be prevented (European Consumer Safety Association 2001). Burn and scald injuries can be caused by contact with hot liquids and hot appliances as well as by misusing matches, cigarette lighters and fireworks.
- e) Young children suffer serious burns more quickly than adults. Severe burns cause severe pain, require multiple hospitalisations and lengthy treatment and may result in permanent disability and disfigurement (Child Accident Prevention Trust 2008). They may also have an impact on social and psychological wellbeing (for example, due to enforced absence from school and in terms of the resulting burden on families and carers).

- f) It costs UK A&E departments approximately £146 million a year to treat unintentional injuries among children and young people. Half of these injuries occur at home (Audit Commission and Healthcare Commission 2007). Further treatment costs are significant, for example, it can cost £250,000 to treat one severe bath water scald (Child Accident Prevention Trust 2008). The financial impact of fire on the economy of England and Wales is estimated at £7.03 billion (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister 2006).

## **4 The guidance**

Public health guidance will be developed according to NICE processes and methods. For details see section 5.

This document defines exactly what this guidance will (and will not) examine and what the guidance developers will consider. The scope is based on a referral from the DH (see appendix A).

### **4.1 *Who is the focus?***

#### **4.1.1 Groups that will be covered**

- Children and young people aged under 15, particularly those in disadvantaged circumstances (for example, those living with families on a low income, living in overcrowded housing or with a lone parent).
- Parents and carers of children and young people aged under 15.

#### **4.1.2 Groups that will not be covered**

Anyone aged 15 or older, except parents and carers of children and young people aged under 15.

### **4.2 *Activities***

#### **4.2.1 Activities/measures that will be covered**

NICE is developing public health guidance (using the programme development process) to prevent unintentional injuries among children and young people aged under 15. NICE is also developing public health guidance Preventing unintentional injuries among under 15s in the home draft scope for consultation 3 November 2008–1 December 2008

(using the intervention development process) to prevent injuries on the road and in other external environments. This guidance will complement these publications. However, it will not be possible to cover all potential areas of the DH referral. The guidance will focus on:

- Local interventions to prevent unintentional injuries from fire, hot fluids, electric sockets and heat-generating appliances in the home among children and young people aged under 15. These will include the following either combined or delivered separately:
  - Education (delivered via media such as local campaigns, videos, leaflets and booklets or face-to-face).
  - Supply and installation of safety equipment (such as smoke alarms, hot water temperature restrictors, electrical socket protectors or oven guards and locks) and other changes in the home.
  - Other activities such as home risk assessments and training for professionals. It may also include reward and incentive schemes, and hazard and risk counselling for children, young people, parents and carers.

Steps will be taken to identify ineffective as well as effective interventions and approaches.

#### **4.2.2 Activities/measures that will not be covered**

- a) Prevention of falls, drowning and submersion, suffocation and poisoning in the home among children and young people aged under 15. (Please note, NICE could develop separate guidance, based on the same DH referral, on preventing falls, drowning and submersion, suffocation and poisoning in the home. NICE welcomes stakeholder comments on this suggestion.)
- b) Policy and legislative changes.
- c) National media campaigns.
- d) Prevention of chemical, cold or radiation burns.

Please note the interventions and activities listed above may also be covered in other NICE guidance currently under development.

### **4.3 Key questions and outcomes**

Below are the overarching questions that will be addressed along with some of the outcomes that would be considered as evidence:

**Question 1:** Which interventions are effective and cost effective in preventing unintentional burns and scalds and other injuries from fire among children and young people aged under 15 in the home?

#### **Expected outcomes:**

- Changes in knowledge, attitude, skills and behaviour in relation to preventing unintentional burns and scalds and other injuries from fire among children and young people aged under 15 in the home.
- The supply, installation and maintenance of safety equipment and other changes to the home environment resulting in a reduction in unintentional burns and scalds and other injuries from fire among children and young people aged under 15 in the home.

**Question 2:** What are the barriers and facilitators to implementing effective and cost-effective interventions to prevent unintentional burns and scalds and other injuries from fire among children and young people aged under 15 in the home?

### **4.4 Status of this document**

This is the draft scope, released for consultation on 3 November 2008 until 1 December 2008, to be discussed at a public meeting on 18 November 2008. Following consultation, the final version of the scope will be available at the NICE website in January 2009.

## **5 Further information**

The public health guidance development process and methods are described in 'Methods for development of NICE public health guidance' (NICE 2006)

Preventing unintentional injuries among under 15s in the home draft scope for consultation 3 November 2008–1 December 2008



available at [www.nice.org.uk/phmethods](http://www.nice.org.uk/phmethods) and 'The public health guidance development process: An overview for stakeholders, including public health practitioners, policy makers and the public' (NICE 2006) available at [www.nice.org.uk/phprocess](http://www.nice.org.uk/phprocess)

## **6 Related NICE guidance**

### ***Published***

Behaviour change. NICE public health guidance 6 (2007). Available from [www.nice.org.uk/PH6](http://www.nice.org.uk/PH6)

### ***In development***

When to suspect child maltreatment. NICE clinical guideline (due May 2009).

Strategies to prevent unintentional injuries among children. NICE public health guidance (due October 2010).

Preventing unintentional road injuries among under 15s. NICE public health guidance (due April 2010).

Preventing unintentional injuries among under 15s in the external environment. NICE public health guidance (due October 2010).

## **Appendix A Referral from the Department of Health**

The Department of Health asked NICE to:

‘Produce guidance on public health interventions to reduce accidental injuries to persons under the age of 15 in the home’.

## Appendix B Potential considerations

It is anticipated that the Public Health Interventions Advisory Committee (PHIAC) will consider the following issues in relation to any intervention it examines:

- Do individual factors (such as gender, age, ethnicity, religion) influence its effectiveness?
- What impact does it have on people with disabilities?
- What impact does it have on inequalities in health?
- What are the barriers and facilitators to implementation?
- What impact do the following have on effectiveness, cost effectiveness and acceptability:
  - provider
  - setting
  - who delivers the intervention, their level of training and competence
  - format of advice and information (for example, is it better to give advice verbally or in printed format)?
- Are tailored services/interventions more effective and cost effective than generic services/interventions?
- Is it more effective and cost effective to combine interventions or to provide them in isolation?
- How available, complex and costly is the safety equipment used?
- Do regular maintenance checks and/or the provision of additional maintenance kit increase the effectiveness and cost effectiveness of safety equipment (for example, batteries and instruction manuals)?
- Are there any adverse or unintended consequences? For example, does supplying safety equipment/safety education make people more complacent about the risks of a fire?
- What are the views of children, young people, families, carers and the wider public of the intervention?

## Appendix C References

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Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2006) The economic cost of fire: estimates for 2004 [online]. Available from: [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)

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