

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CLINICAL EXCELLENCE

QUALITY STANDARD SCOPE

1 Quality standard title

Caesarean section

2 Quality standards

NICE quality standards are a set of specific, concise statements that act as markers of high-quality, cost-effective patient care, covering the treatment and prevention of different diseases and conditions.

NICE quality standards are derived from the best available evidence, such as NICE guidance and other evidence sources accredited by NICE. They are developed independently by NICE, in collaboration with the NHS, social care professionals, and their partners and service users, and address clinical and cost effectiveness, patient safety and patient experience.

This work is intended to help the NHS focus on delivering the best possible outcomes for patients.

The quality standard development process is described in detail on the NICE website (see section 5, 'Further information').

3 This standard

This scope defines what the standard will (and will not) examine. It is based on the referral from the Department of Health and has been drafted following the first meeting of the Topic Expert Group.

The areas that will be addressed by the standard are described in the following sections.

3.1 Population

Women who plan for or may require a caesarean section.

3.1.1 Groups that will be covered

- a) All women who plan for or may require a caesarean section.
- b) No patient subgroups have been identified as needing specific consideration.

3.1.2 Groups that will not be covered

- a) No patient subgroups have been identified for exclusion from this quality standard.

3.2 Healthcare settings

- a) Primary care, community care, secondary care and tertiary care.

3.3 Areas of care

The areas of care of a patient's pathway used to inform the development of the quality statements are set out in section 3.3.1. During the development of the standard the Topic Expert Group will decide which of these areas are suitable for quality statements and measures. The draft quality statements and measures will be the subject of a public consultation. The content of the quality standard statements may change during the process and may differ after consultation with stakeholders.

3.3.1 Areas of care that will be considered

- a) Maternal request for caesarean section
- b) Vaginal birth after previous caesarean section.
- c) The use of steroids in women having an elective caesarean section before 39 weeks gestation.
- d) The use of fetal blood sampling to inform decision whether to conduct a caesarean section.

- e) Involvement of senior staff in making the decision to conduct a caesarean section.
- f) Involvement of senior staff in conducting emergency caesarean sections.
- g) Debriefing for women following caesarean section.
- h) Maternal complications following caesarean section.

3.3.2 Areas of care that will not be considered

- a) Routine antenatal, intrapartum and postnatal care.
- b) Fetal / infant complications.

3.4 Economic aspects

The Topic Expert Group will take into account both clinical and cost effectiveness when prioritising the quality statements to be included in the quality standard. The economic evidence will be considered, and the cost and commissioning impact of implementing the quality standard will be assessed.

3.5 Timing

The development of the quality standard will begin in July 2012.

4 Key development sources

Relevant NICE guidance (published and in development) will be used to develop the quality standard. If available, other NICE accredited sources will also be used.

4.1 Published sources

- [Caesarean section](#). NICE clinical guideline 132 (2011).
- [Antenatal care](#). NICE clinical guideline 62 (2008).
- [Intrapartum care](#). NICE clinical guideline 55 (2007).
- [Birth after previous caesarean birth](#). Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (2007) (currently under revision).

- [Postnatal care](#). NICE clinical guideline 37 (2006).

4.2 Related NICE quality standards

4.2.1 Published standards

- [Patient experience in adult NHS services](#). NICE quality standard (2012).
- [Specialist neonatal care](#). NICE quality standard (2010).

4.2.2 Standards in development

- Antenatal care.
- Postnatal care.
- Hypertension in pregnancy.

4.2.3 Maternity quality standard topics referred to core library not yet in development:

- Intrapartum care.
- Induction of labour.
- Diabetes in pregnancy.
- Pain and bleeding in early pregnancy
- Multiple pregnancy.
- Premature labour.
- Antenatal and postnatal mental health.

4.3 Key policy documents and national audits

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

4.3.1 Key policy documents

- [The “never events” list 2011/12](#): policy framework for use in the NHS (section heading: Maternal death due to post-partum haemorrhage after elective caesarean section), Department of Health (2011)

- [Maternity matters](#): choice, access and continuity of care in a safe service, Department of Health (2007)
- [Delivering quality and value](#): focus on fractured neck of femur; primary hip and knee replacement; acute stroke; caesarean section; short stay emergency care, Department of Health (2005)

4.3.2 National audits

- [Maternity data](#), Hospital Episode Statistics (2010-11)
- [Saving mothers' lives](#): reviewing maternal deaths to make motherhood safer: 2006–08. The eighth report on confidential enquiries into maternal deaths in the United Kingdom. Centre for Maternal and Child Enquiries (CMACE) (2011)
- [Delivered with care](#): a national survey of women's experience of maternity care. National perinatal epidemiology unit (2010)
- [Maternity services survey](#), Care Quality Commission (2010)
- [The national sentinel caesarean section audit report](#), Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (2001)

5 Further information

Information on the quality standard development process is provided in the [NICE quality standards interim process guide](#).

[Information on the progress of this quality standard](#) is also available.