

**How to use  
NICE guidance  
to commission  
high-quality services**

# Acknowledgement

We are grateful to the many organisations and individuals who have contributed to the development of this guide. A list of these contributors is available at [www.nice.org.uk/implementation](http://www.nice.org.uk/implementation)

# Foreword

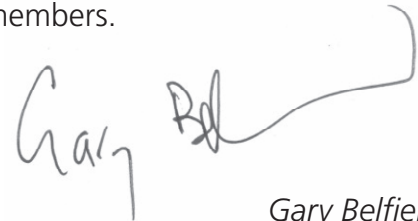
Being a world class commissioner means using the best evidence to specify and procure services that deliver improved outcomes for patients and populations, which provide a high-quality experience and deliver value for money for taxpayers. To do this commissioners need to place themselves at the centre of their local health economies and use their influential position as the local leaders of the NHS to shape the services they commission.

Using NICE guidance, and in particular NICE clinical and public health guidance, should be the starting point for commissioners looking to ensure their populations get the healthcare that best meets their needs. NICE guidance is seen worldwide as the standard setter for effective health services.

Commissioners will want to make sure that they and their partners have systems in place to optimise use of NICE guidance throughout the commissioning process. NICE guidance can help to support the commissioning of new services, the evaluation or redesign of existing services and the decommissioning of ineffective interventions.

This 'How to' guide outlines how NICE guidance supports the commissioning of high-quality services, and describes how the guidance can be used throughout the commissioning cycle. It also describes the support available from NICE and how using NICE guidance can support the achievement of world class commissioning competencies.

It's a must read for all those involved in commissioning services across health and social care and will prove a really valuable resource for board members.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gary Belfield', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

*Gary Belfield*  
*Acting Director General for Commissioning and System Management*  
*Department of Health*

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# Part 1

## Why has NICE produced this guide?

NICE has produced this guide to help you commission high-quality services. NICE guidance provides you with robust, evidence-based, cost-effective national recommendations that you can use to inform local decision-making in commissioning health services and interventions that promote health and wellbeing.

You can use NICE and NHS Evidence accredited guidelines to support the focus on quality and productivity and ensure optimal care, which can help you release resources or generate savings. You can use our implementation tools when planning, prioritising and commissioning services. This guide will help you use our guidance and tools in your commissioning process.

### Who is this guide for?

This guide is for people involved in commissioning health and social care services and public health programmes within the NHS and partner organisations in England, but the principles may be useful for commissioners throughout the UK.

Joint commissioners and people working in local authorities may find this guide useful to inform partnership working and joint planning. Providers of health and social care services and public health programmes may also find this guide useful to understand the benefits of delivering services in line with NICE guidance.

## What is this guide for?

This guide is to support commissioners in developing systems and processes that embed NICE guidance into commissioning, and to signpost sources of further information and practical help. You can use it to develop long-term plans and strategies for commissioning that are evidence based and focused on the needs of your population. The guide can also support day-to-day commissioning.

NICE is aware of the financial context in which commissioning and planning is currently taking place within the NHS. We are undertaking a number of initiatives to support the NHS to implement our guidance while achieving financial balance. More information is available at [www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk)

# Part 2

## How can PCT boards support the use of NICE guidance?

### **Why should PCT boards support the use of NICE guidance?**

World class commissioning emphasises the responsibility of PCT boards to manage risks and demonstrate their input into strategic planning and performance management. Working within financial constraints and focusing on quality and productivity, how can PCT boards ensure organisations perform at their best, while meeting the requirements of the Care Quality Commission and world class commissioning?

Making NICE guidance an integral part of the commissioning process can help PCT boards fulfil these responsibilities and meet national requirements and standards. Having the right processes in place can provide assurance that robust decision-making underpins the planning of services for your local community. This includes cases for investment and decommissioning ineffective interventions.

Boards can also use NICE guidance and implementation tools to inform work with stakeholders (including local authorities), set priorities and assess the value and anticipated outcomes of implementing the guidance. This will improve the effectiveness and quality of services, and promote the health and wellbeing of the population.

Part 4 of this guide provides further information on how NICE's guidance and implementation support tools can help PCT boards meet world class commissioning competencies.

There is a statutory obligation for PCTs to make funding available for treatments recommended in NICE's technology appraisal guidance. Clinicians are expected to take all NICE's guidance fully into account in the treatment of patients. The Audit Commission recommends that organisations develop a sustainable approach to financial planning, use horizon scanning to identify forthcoming guidance, and assess the cost impact of implementing guidance<sup>1</sup>. This requires effective financial planning to make the best use of resources, and good links between commissioners, providers, financial planners and clinicians. More information about meeting legal requirements and effective financial planning is available at [www.nice.org.uk/usingguidance/benefitsofimplementation](http://www.nice.org.uk/usingguidance/benefitsofimplementation)

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<sup>1</sup> Audit Commission (2005) Managing the financial implications of NICE guidance. London: Audit Commission. Available from [www.audit-commission.gov.uk/nationalstudies/health/financialmanagement/pages/niceguidance.aspx](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/nationalstudies/health/financialmanagement/pages/niceguidance.aspx)

## How can PCT boards assess whether NICE guidance is being used?

- Are systems in place to actively monitor when new NICE guidance is published?
- What impact will implementing guidance have, and how does this shape your vision for the health and wellbeing of the local population? How is implementation built into business planning processes and who needs to be involved?
- Are all commissioning decisions within the organisation, including joint, collaborative and specialised commissioning arrangements, based on NICE guidance and accredited information provided by NHS Evidence? (See Part 5 for further information.) How is this demonstrated in strategic planning and business processes? Are the Professional Executive Committee and local clinicians involved in this process?
- Are providers of health and social care services and public health programmes delivering services and interventions based on NICE guidance? If not, how are you ensuring they are moving towards compliance? What improvement measures should be introduced? How can the board be assured that there is an improvement in the quality and effectiveness of provision? What impact will this have on your ability to meet 'vital signs' and world class commissioning commitments?

More information on how to benefit from using NICE guidance is included in Part 3 of this guide.

Use the NICE forward planner to develop a 6-month agenda of topics for discussion. You can assess your current position and plan to implement guidance and commission services. More information is available in Part 5 and at [www.nice.org.uk/usingguidance/implementationtools](http://www.nice.org.uk/usingguidance/implementationtools)

## Case study: NHS North Yorkshire and York – finding the mission for commissioning

NHS North Yorkshire and York used NICE guidance alongside local data to provide an evidence base to inform future priorities and strategic planning. The Trust wanted to go beyond 'needs assessment' to 'needs addressment'. It used the principles of programme budgeting to identify existing expenditure, together with local data, background information and evidence (for example, NICE guidance) to use resources to maximum effect.

"Public health reports, published annually by Directors of Public Health, are an ideal vehicle for publicising NICE guidance and citing the evidence for specific topics." said Dr Peter Brambleby, Director of Public Health, NHS North Yorkshire and York. "The latest report from our PCT does just this, putting evidence alongside data and background information to help us move services forward."

The annual report of the Director of Public Health began with these questions about North Yorkshire and York: What are the health needs, inequalities and trends? Where does the NHS money go and how can we plan for greater efficiency? How will we deliver the topics in 'Healthy ambitions' and demonstrate world class commissioning? What work was the public health directorate engaged in last year? Challenges: what is the mission for commissioning in the year ahead?

The Trust's first Joint Strategic Needs Assessment combined background information (populations, determinants, diseases, trends and inequalities), narrative (patients' stories and ideas) and evidence (NICE public health guidance and clinical guidelines). The Trust also set out what it proposed to do, which linked to the Local Area Agreement and its targets. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment was themed around topics that the public said were most important to them: being healthy, being safe, quality of life, making a positive contribution, economic wellbeing, and access to high-quality services. The Trust also linked the topics to the themes of the NHS Next Stage Review, known locally as 'Healthy ambitions'.

# Part 3

## How can NICE guidance help you?

### Why use NICE guidance in commissioning?

We provide national guidance for the NHS, local authorities, and other public organisations on the promotion of good health and the prevention and treatment of ill health.

In order to make sure our guidance represents value for money, we use the best available evidence and health economic modelling to weigh up benefits and costs.

Using NICE guidance can help commissioners in the following ways:

- Providing evidence-based recommendations about clinically-effective and cost-effective treatments and interventions to improve outcomes for your population.
- Providing recommendations that can be used to inform local ambitions for quality improvement, for example, within the Commissioning for Quality and Innovation (CQUIN) payment framework. Commissioners should use existing contract levers to ensure providers are implementing guidance. For more information, see Managing the financial impact of NICE guidance on page 18.

- Providing clear recommendations to support the NHS in working with partner organisations to develop joint commissioning in the form of joint strategic partnerships, Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and Local Area Agreements.
- Enabling organisations to demonstrate that they comply with registration requirements assessed by the Care Quality Commission, world class commissioning competencies, the assurance framework, and Comprehensive Area Assessments.
- Providing assurance for PCT boards, practice-based commissioning organisations, Overview and Scrutiny Committees, elected members and the public, that robust evidence underpins decision-making.
- Providing evidence to support cases for investment and the decommissioning of services, helping to make efficiencies in the system, for example identifying

*The NHS is being asked to focus on ensuring quality care while at the same time planning for a challenging financial situation. To help support the NHS in these new, challenging circumstances, NICE has produced a list of what we estimate to be cost-saving guidance.*

*For more information, see [www.nice.org.uk/usingguidance/benefitsofimplementation](http://www.nice.org.uk/usingguidance/benefitsofimplementation)*

treatments or interventions that do not add value, and thresholds below which they are not cost effective.

- Helping you optimise the use of people (healthcare professionals) and resources through implementing recommendations for evidence-based treatments and care.
- Supporting business planning by ensuring that you are basing your local priority setting, planning and agreed outcomes on robust evidence.
- Providing a framework for working with clinicians and practice-based commissioners to identify opportunities for service redesign.
- Providing evidence-based information that can inform discussions with patients, carers and the public.

Also see Strategic planning on page 22.

## **Case study: North East Lincolnshire Care Trust Plus – using NICE guidance to support investment in cost-effective treatments and interventions**

The NICE clinical guideline on long-acting reversible contraception (LARC) identified the clinical effectiveness and cost effectiveness of LARC methods, and identified potential cost savings linked with reducing unplanned pregnancies. North East Lincolnshire Care Trust Plus undertook a baseline assessment of the use of LARC across north east Lincolnshire, mapping locations of provision of LARC and the percentage uptake of contraception in the eligible female population. This assessment demonstrated that there were marked variations in the uptake of LARC across practice-based commissioning groups. This review identified the following points:

- There were gaps in training, which represented a barrier to increasing the number of providers of services offering LARC.
- There were no referral pathways between providers and non-providers of LARC.
- There was a lack of promotion of contraception to both women and GPs, which could improve knowledge of LARC methods.

As a result the PCT developed an action plan to address the key areas of concern and improve access and uptake of LARC methods. This led to an increase in the use of LARC, and the PCT is continuing to work to improve this.

Long-acting reversible contraception. NICE clinical guideline 30 (2005). Available from [www.nice.org.uk/CG30](http://www.nice.org.uk/CG30)

## What guidance does NICE produce?

We produce the following types of guidance:

- Clinical guidelines – recommendations about the treatment and care of people with specific diseases or conditions in the NHS<sup>2</sup>.
- Health technologies (technology appraisal guidance and interventional procedures guidance) – guidance on the use of new and existing medicines, treatments and procedures in the NHS<sup>3</sup>.
- Public health guidance – guidance on ways of helping people improve their health and reduce their risk of illness<sup>4</sup>.

The booklet 'NICE: our guidance sets the standard for good healthcare' explains more about NICE and the types of guidance we produce (available from [www.nice.org.uk/aboutnice](http://www.nice.org.uk/aboutnice)).

## NICE's topic selection process

The Department of Health asks NICE to develop clinical guidelines, based on the best available evidence, on the appropriate treatment and care of people with specific diseases and conditions. We are also asked to produce guidance on the promotion of good health and the prevention of ill health for those working in the NHS, local authorities and the wider public and voluntary sector. Key areas for consideration when

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<sup>2</sup> Clinical guidelines apply to England and Wales, and may also apply to Northern Ireland under special arrangements.

<sup>3</sup> Technology appraisal guidance applies to England and Wales and is reviewed locally in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Interventional procedures guidance applies to England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Interventional procedures guidance makes recommendations on the safety and efficacy of a procedure. The guidance does not cover whether or not the NHS should fund a procedure. Decisions about funding are taken by local NHS bodies.

<sup>4</sup> Public health guidance applies to England only.

identifying topics for clinical guidelines and public health guidance include the burden of disease, the cost impact on the NHS or the public sector, policy importance, and whether there is inappropriate variation in practice across the country.

The Department of Health also asks us to develop guidance, in the form of technology appraisals, where it would be beneficial to have clarity about the value of a new or existing drug, treatment or intervention. Key areas for consideration when identifying topics for technology appraisals include the number of people affected, the severity of the disease, the cost impact on the NHS, and the extent to which a new drug or treatment claims measurable therapeutic benefit over currently available NHS treatments.

Anyone can notify a procedure for consideration by the Interventional Procedures Programme, although the main source of notifications is clinicians and healthcare professionals. Notifications are usually made via our website. To fall within the Programme's remit, the procedure must involve an incision or a puncture or entry into a body cavity, or use ionising, electromagnetic or acoustic energy, should be available in the NHS or private sector, and be either not yet considered standard clinical practice or be a standard clinical procedure with new questions about its safety or efficacy.

If NICE guidance is available, it is an indication that the subject is an important issue that affects your population.

## Using NICE guidance to assess needs and set priorities

As a commissioner, you need to anticipate our guidance in advance of its publication and assess it against the national, regional and local priorities identified in your 5-year strategic plan or Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. You need to estimate the resource and cost impact, and prepare the health economy to support implementation of the guidance.

## Managing the financial impact of NICE guidance

Reference costs have been collected annually since 1988 and show the average cost to the NHS of providing a service. They are generally used to inform the national payment by results (PbR) tariff. If NICE guidance is published after the reference cost data have been collected, the impact of guidance is not included. Therefore to ensure the PbR tariff is sufficient, NICE and the Department of Health's tariff setting team identify the impact of the guidance and adjust the tariff accordingly. For more information on the financial impact of NICE guidance, go to [www.nice.org.uk/improvequalitysavemoney](http://www.nice.org.uk/improvequalitysavemoney)

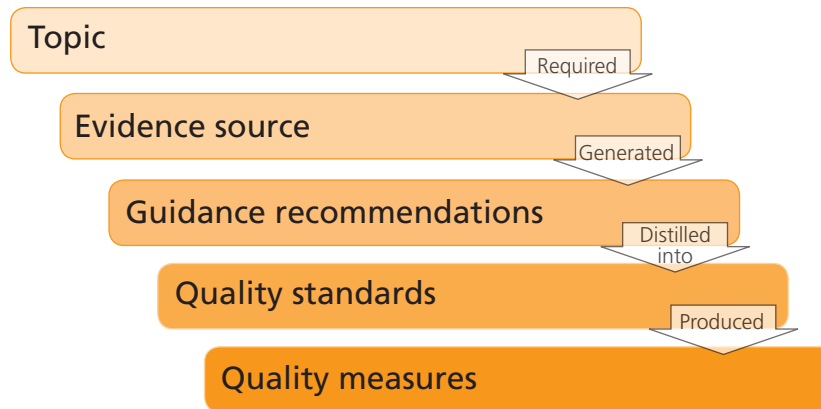
## Using quality standards in your commissioning process

A quality standard is a set of specific, concise statements that:

- act as markers of high-quality, cost-effective patient care across a pathway or clinical area, covering treatment or prevention
- are derived from the best available evidence
- are produced collaboratively with the NHS and social care, along with their partners and patients.

The Department of Health identified a role for NICE in developing independent quality standards. The National Quality Board has been created to offer transparent advice on what the priorities should be for clinical standard setting by NICE.

The standards will include qualitative statements and quantitative measures (linked with national indicators where they exist). NICE works collaboratively with other organisations and consults stakeholders during field testing of quality standards.



*Overview of the quality standards process*

## The role of the Care Quality Commission

The Care Quality Commission is the regulator for health and social care. All organisations providing health and social care services have to register the services they provide with the Care Quality Commission and demonstrate that they are meeting the standards required. If it is shown that an organisation is not providing safe and effective care, as a result of not implementing NICE guidance or complying with technology appraisals, the Care Quality Commission will take appropriate action proportionate to the risk posed to people who use the services.

Commissioners will be able to use NICE quality standards as markers of high-quality care, and patients and the public will see clear statements of what they can expect from services. The Care Quality Commission will take account of how organisations are using quality standards to ensure patients receive high-quality care.

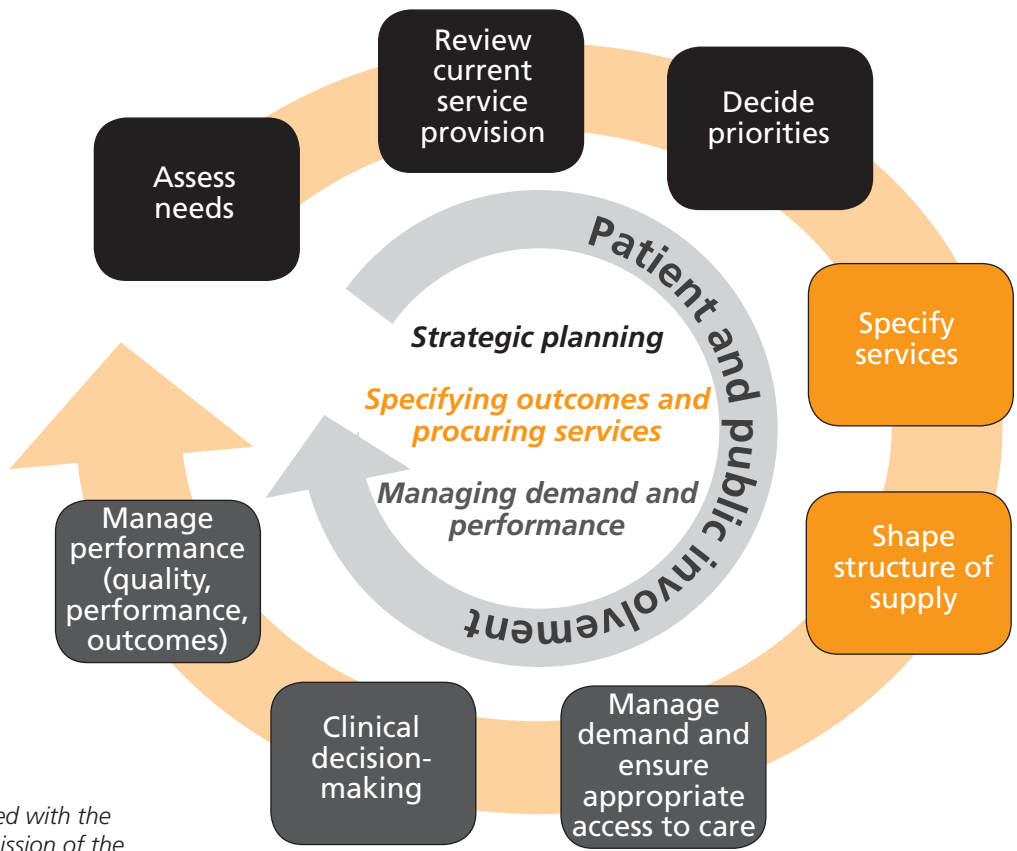
# Part 4

## NICE guidance and the commissioning cycle

NICE guidance and accredited information provided by NHS Evidence should be considered at every stage of the commissioning cycle.

The commissioning cycle was described by the Department of Health in 2006 and has become a recognised model for commissioning NHS services and care.

NICE provides a variety of support tools that can help during different stages of the commissioning cycle, including business and financial planning. For example, we develop costing tools to estimate the resource impact of commissioning a new drug or treatment.



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## Strategic planning

Our guidance and support tools can help you determine local priorities for long-term strategic commissioning and service provision by:

- helping you assess whether current provision meets your population's needs
- providing you with robust, evidence-based recommendations to underpin decisions where there are competing priorities
- helping inform your Joint Strategic Needs Assessment with partner organisations by providing you with information on incidence, prevalence and the burden of disease, helping you benchmark the actual level of disease in your population.

NICE guidance and other accredited sources of information can help you meet the requirements of 'vital signs', Local Area Agreements and national indicator sets. For more information, go to [www.nice.org.uk/vitalsignsmapping](http://www.nice.org.uk/vitalsignsmapping) and [www.nice.org.uk/localareaagreements](http://www.nice.org.uk/localareaagreements)

Commissioners can use our audit support to identify gaps in service provision, monitor improvements and determine where service redesign or decommissioning is required. These tools can be used within the CQUIN payment framework.

Part 5 of this guide provides an overview of some of the support tools that can be found at [www.nice.org.uk/usingguidance](http://www.nice.org.uk/usingguidance)

### **Case study: East Midlands Specialised Commissioning Group/ East Midlands Cancer Network – assessing local priorities**

East Midlands Specialised Commissioning Group/East Midlands Cancer Network carried out a review of all new cancer treatments likely to be licensed and/or reviewed by NICE in the subsequent 18 months. Previously, cancer treatments would have been reviewed by individual PCTs, generally led by clinicians with little input from commissioners, resulting in ad hoc implementation and putting enormous financial pressures on PCTs requiring resources to be re-allocated. The new process enabled a proactive, planned and unified response across the PCTs, ensuring that patients had equitable access to cancer treatments.

Clinicians compiled an initial list of all cancer treatments that they considered would have the greatest benefit for patients. The list was reviewed by commissioners and clinicians, alongside the projected financial impact, to identify treatments that would use funding to maximum effect and be considered value for money. This resulted in a prioritised list of treatments for funding in the next financial year, which was adopted by all participating PCTs. To ensure that treatments were prescribed according to agreed criteria, commissioning policies were developed for the treatments, and monitoring forms were introduced to supplement audit data.

Clinicians have found the process beneficial in knowing when investment would be available. This has facilitated forward planning for patient pathways, the establishment of new clinics, and patient involvement in the process.

## Specifying outcomes and procuring services

Local priorities and expectations will determine the changes that you want to make. Being explicit about the benefits you want to achieve will enable you to demonstrate return on investment. NICE guidance and implementation support tools can help you shape local services and improve outcomes by:

- outlining the key components of a service
- identifying interventions that are cost effective
- identifying interventions that are not effective, which you may need to decommission
- providing a common standard for prevention, treatment and care, which can be used to develop consistency across different service providers
- identifying which healthcare professionals or other providers, for example third sector providers, might be able to deliver the service, or where a change in the structure of supply may be appropriate
- identifying the skills or training that may be required to deliver a high-quality service.

### **Case study: Rotherham weight management service**

Around one third of children and two thirds of adults in Rotherham are overweight or obese. NHS Rotherham used NICE guidance on obesity to design an obesity model and commission a weight management service. The service is outcome based (successful weight loss) and uses multicomponent interventions, as recommended in the NICE guideline. The model of care is tiered, with separate pathways for adults and children. It will offer support for weight management, including preventive interventions, to at least 2000 children, young people and their families and a further 2000 adults over 3 years. People will move up and down through the tiers and be encouraged to self manage.

Interventions for children include Carnegie clubs (fun, locally-based programmes) and residential camps. Adults are offered interventions ranging from community weight management programmes to bariatric surgery. A multidisciplinary team of healthcare professionals provides specialist and one-to-one advice for children, adults and families. The programme includes access to anti-obesity medication as recommended in the NICE guideline. Adults prescribed anti-obesity medication are offered the lifestyle support needed to ensure that the medication is effective in the long term. Pharmacotherapy is also being offered to young people for the first time.

If successful, the investment will pay for itself by preventing obesity and associated ill health in the local population.

Obesity. NICE clinical guideline 43 (2006). Available from [www.nice.org.uk/CG43](http://www.nice.org.uk/CG43)

## Managing demand and performance

NICE guidance and implementation support tools can help you by:

- setting criteria and thresholds for treatment or interventions, to help you ensure appropriate access to services or programmes, and manage service demand
- enabling fair and equal access to care, treatments and interventions for your populations and communities
- clarifying care pathways to highlight where services should be integrated, and to inform referral management and clinical decision-making
- identifying when early diagnosis and intervention can deliver improved patient outcomes
- offering evidence-based opportunities for health promotion and prevention.

## Patient and public involvement

The NHS needs to become more responsive to the patients who use it, and more accountable to the citizens who fund it. Primary care trusts, strategic health authorities and NHS trusts have a duty to make arrangements to involve and consult patients and the public in service planning and operation, and in the development of proposals for changes. Through choice and an increased voice, local people and patients can influence commissioning to ensure that health and social care services are matched to their needs and preferences.

Commissioners need to ensure that patients and communities are involved throughout the commissioning cycle, so local GP practice patient forums, local authority user groups, local involvement networks (LINKs) patient representatives, the third sector

(including community organisations) and PCT patient and user engagement mechanisms can inform commissioning. NICE guidance and implementation support tools can support this process in the following ways:

- Providing clear information about treatment, care and interventions that support self-management, raise awareness, and empower patients and the public. This can also help manage expectations and support joint decision-making.
- Providing an opportunity for public consultation.
- Demonstrating that the local health community is basing commissioning decisions on robust, evidence-based guidance to improve health and reduce health inequalities.

Feedback about patients' and carers' experiences can help to inform needs assessments and strategic planning, and support experience-based design.

'Community engagement to improve health' (NICE public health guidance 9) contains recommendations for commissioners, including those in local authorities and the third and private sectors, on working with and involving communities in decisions about healthcare.

## **Building NICE guidance into your commissioning cycle**

Many organisations already have NICE leads or managers to support the implementation of NICE guidance locally. PCTs may wish to consider working with the NICE leads or managers to ensure that NICE guidance is a core part of the commissioning process. Some areas have developed systems that ensure their local implementation strategy is integral to commissioning.

## World class commissioning competencies

NICE guidance and support tools can help you meet the following world class commissioning competencies:

No.	World class commissioning competency	How NICE can help commissioners
4	<b>Collaborate with clinicians</b> Lead continuous and meaningful engagement of a broad range of clinicians to inform strategy and drive quality, service design and efficient and effective use of resources.	Recommendations from NICE guidance can provide a robust evidence base to inform discussions with clinicians and provide opportunities for innovation, redesign and implementing effective treatments.
5	<b>Manage knowledge and assess need</b> Manage knowledge and undertake robust and regular needs assessments that establish a full understanding of current and future local health needs and requirements.	NICE recommendations provide national standards, which may be important in identifying where there is a variation with best practice. This can be used to benchmark data on local services and compare performance and outcomes.
6	<b>Prioritise investment of all spend</b> Prioritise investment of all spend in line with different financial scenarios and according to local needs, service requirements and the values of the NHS.	NICE provides an evidence base to support modelling and comparisons between best practice and return on previous investments and interventions.
7	<b>Stimulate the market</b> Effectively stimulate the market to meet demand and secure required clinical, and health and wellbeing outcomes.	NICE recommendations can help define outcomes and quality specifications for providers. Guidance can identify key stakeholders. This can be useful to inform the development of a mixed economy of provision across sectors, including provision for public health programmes.

No.	World class commissioning competency	How NICE can help commissioners
8	<p><b>Promote improvement and innovation</b> Promote and specify continuous improvements in quality (for example CQUIN, indicators for quality improvement) and outcomes, through clinical and provider innovation and configuration.</p>	<p>NICE guidance provides recommendations on effective interventions for prevention and treatment, which can help you implement continual improvement in the quality and outcomes of services.</p>
9	<p><b>Secure procurement skills</b> Secure procurement skills that ensure robust and viable contracts.</p>	<p>NICE recommendations provide national standards, which can help you define service requirements, enabling improvements through negotiation in service quality and value for money.</p>
10	<p><b>Manage the local health system</b> Effectively manage systems and work in partnership with providers to ensure contract compliance and continuous improvements in quality and outcomes.</p>	<p>You can use NICE recommendations to inform discussions about provider performance and quality of care. For example, you can include the implementation of NICE recommendations in plans to improve provider performance, which could be monitored using NICE audit support.</p>
11	<p><b>Ensuring efficiency and effectiveness of spend</b></p>	<p>NICE guidance identifies treatments and interventions that are cost effective, and treatments and interventions of low value that are not recommended. You can review current spend on these areas.</p>

# Part 5

## What support does NICE offer commissioners?

### **Implementation support**

A range of implementation support tools are available on our website ([www.nice.org.uk/usingguidance](http://www.nice.org.uk/usingguidance)). These will help you commission evidence-based services and assess the impact of implementing NICE guidance locally.

### **'How to' guides**

We have a number of 'How to' guides, which advise the NHS and local authorities about using NICE guidance to improve patient care and wellbeing.

### **Forward planner**

This summarises published and forthcoming NICE guidance. It explains which sectors are likely to be affected, estimates the potential cost impact, and notes what the impact may be on PbR.

## **Commissioning guides**

Topic-specific commissioning guides and associated tools are web-based resources to support effective local commissioning of evidence-based care for patients. They offer detailed practical information on key clinical and service-related issues, and an interactive commissioning tool to help you estimate and inform the level of service needed locally, as well as the cost of local commissioning decisions.

## **Costing tools**

Costing tools help assess the financial impact of implementing NICE guidance. They comprise a national costing report and a flexible Excel costing template, which you can amend to estimate local costs and savings.

## **Audit support**

Audit support tools help people carry out baseline assessments and monitor any subsequent activities. They are available in formats that can be integrated into local audit systems.

## **Slide sets**

Slide sets are presentations (with notes) that can help to raise awareness of new guidance at an early stage. They highlight the key priorities for implementation and offer questions that can be used in discussion. They can be adapted to suit local needs.

## **Bespoke support tools**

We develop bespoke tools to help implement NICE guidance. Such tools include implementation advice (providing help with action planning), guides to resources (highlighting tools, resources and examples of good practice), commissioning factsheets, algorithms, planning checklists, patient leaflets, posters and template letters. You may find them useful to feed into your local commissioning and planning processes.

## **Quick reference guides**

Quick reference guides summarise the guidance recommendations and list the key priorities for implementation, which will help you to identify priorities for your local area. They often contain clinical pathways, which can help in planning changes to local services.

## **Understanding NICE guidance**

These leaflets explain what NICE has said. They are written for patients, carers and those with little medical knowledge, and can be used in local patient information leaflets or any other suitable publication. They are available for clinical guidelines and health technology guidance.

## **Optimal practice review: recommendation reminders**

Optimal practice review: recommendation reminders help commissioners to identify areas of practice that are no longer recommended. They may help support a local case for disinvestment.

## **Implementation consultants**

NICE has a field-based team of implementation consultants who work with organisations to help to put our guidance into practice. Each consultant works with NHS, local authority and other organisations in their area, ensuring regular interaction with NICE stakeholders and facilitating implementation of NICE guidance. Email [FieldTeam@nice.org.uk](mailto:FieldTeam@nice.org.uk) to find your local consultant.

## **Shared Learning database**

The Shared Learning database provides examples from organisations implementing NICE guidance and the lessons they have learnt.

## **NHS Evidence**

NHS Evidence is a service that provides quick and easy access to a range of best practice, clinical and non-clinical information to help you make informed decisions about treatments and resources as part of the commissioning process. If you have an Athens account you can also access subscription journals. NHS Evidence also has a robust accreditation scheme that identifies trusted sources of guidance with an accreditation mark, increasing your confidence in the information available.

NHS Evidence for Commissioning is a specialist collection relating to commissioning. It includes information about commissioning competencies, service sectors, datasets and case studies. Information on key topic areas, such as financial management and involving patients in commissioning, is updated regularly. Commissioners can also keep up to date with significant new evidence through a monthly e-bulletin – ‘Eyes on evidence’. Subscription is free via the portal, see [www.evidence.nhs.uk](http://www.evidence.nhs.uk)

# Part 6

## How can you get involved?

### Take part in the development of guidance

You can suggest topics for consideration by NICE, register to be involved in the development of guidance, or take part in the consultation process for a guidance topic that interests you – your input is valued. To find out how, visit [www.nice.org.uk/getinvolved](http://www.nice.org.uk/getinvolved)

### Get involved with the NICE implementation support programme

You can also get involved in a number of our implementation support programmes by sending your comments or joining advisory or reference groups, for example:

- Talk to your local NICE implementation consultant. Email [FieldTeam@nice.org.uk](mailto:FieldTeam@nice.org.uk) to find your local consultant.
- Get involved with the NICE commissioning programme. Email the commissioning team at [commissioningguides@nice.org.uk](mailto:commissioningguides@nice.org.uk)
- Get involved in our implementation programme – email us at [erg@nice.org.uk](mailto:erg@nice.org.uk)

Register at  
[www.nice.org.uk/  
enewsletter](http://www.nice.org.uk/enewsletter)  
for monthly e-alerts  
from NICE

- Have you got some tips to share with other organisations on implementing NICE guidance? Perhaps you've come up with an innovative way to commission services based on a particular set of NICE recommendations. Why not submit an example to the Shared Learning database? Go to [www.nice.org.uk/sharedlearning](http://www.nice.org.uk/sharedlearning)

## Develop local networks

- Work with your NICE manager or lead to support implementation of NICE guidance through the services you commission.
- Pass the guidance on to local partner organisations and networks, using our quick reference guides and implementation support tools.
- Link with your stakeholder organisations to disseminate guidance and determine the impact of implementing the guidance in your area.

## Let us keep you informed

Sign up to NICE monthly e-alerts, which will tell you when guidance is being published.

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