

NHS

*National Institute for
Health and Clinical Excellence*



**NICE: our guidance
sets the standard for
good healthcare**

NICE guidance sets standards in four different areas.

- Guidance to encourage good **public health**: for example we have recommended a range of activities to encourage people to take exercise.
- Guidance on the care and treatment of people being looked after in the NHS. These are called **clinical guidelines**, and cover a wide range of topics. For example, we have made recommendations on the best care for people with depression, for the care of pregnant women, and the care of children with a high temperature.
- Guidance about when and under what circumstances drugs and other technologies should be prescribed on the NHS. This is called **technology appraisals guidance**. The NHS is obliged to put our technology appraisal recommendations into practice within 3 months unless special circumstances apply.
- Guidance about when and under what circumstances certain surgical procedures should be offered on the NHS. This is called **interventional procedures guidance**.

NICE guidance sets the standard for good healthcare

We are an **independent organisation** responsible for producing guidance that sets the standards for good healthcare so that everyone gets the same **high-quality care**. We also provide guidance to help local authorities, and other public organisations, ensure services offered in your area improve the health and wellbeing of your community.

All NHS organisations in England and Wales are expected to meet our standards; this means wherever you live you should get the same high-quality care.

We provide clear guidance where there is uncertainty

We don't produce guidance on every health topic. We are asked by the Department of Health to look at areas where there is confusion or uncertainty among healthcare professionals about the value of a drug, device or treatment. We also look at ways to promote and **encourage good health** in areas where there isn't already clear, nationally-agreed guidance.



We work to help people stay healthy

Our standards promote good health, **prevent ill health** and help professionals spot diseases and conditions early.

Prevention is better than cure. We provide guidance to help develop services that encourage good health and wellbeing. For example, by providing guidance on what works best for employers who want to help their staff stop smoking, we are helping to reduce the number of people who will need treatment in the future for smoking-related diseases like lung cancer.

Our guidance is produced by people affected by our work

The independent committees who produce our guidance discuss the evidence and make decisions about a particular health topic. The people on the committees have a wide range of backgrounds. There are **professionals**, including surgeons, GPs, researchers, and town planners and social care advisers. And there are members of the **public**, including **patients**, people working in charities, teachers and community workers.

Each committee member is carefully selected to ensure there is a good mix of skills and experience relevant to the particular health topic. The committees ensure the guidance we produce is relevant and fair.



Our guidance is based on the best evidence

We base our decisions on evidence. The best evidence includes both **published** evidence and evidence based on **real life** experiences. Experts from top universities make sure the evidence we use is **good quality** and relevant. Specialists in the health topic also share their experience with us and help us see how our guidance might be put into practice. And patients and carers tell us about their experiences and help us understand what matters most to them and their families.

We ask for your comments

We always ask for your comments on our guidance before we make the final decisions. You can tell us if you think we have missed an important piece of evidence and whether or not we have involved the right organisations. You can tell us how you think our decisions might **impact** on **you**.

All of our decisions are explained

We make very difficult decisions and believe it is important to make sure you can see why we have made these decisions. We take care to ensure all of our decisions are **explained** and backed by good **evidence**.



Our guidance is good value for money

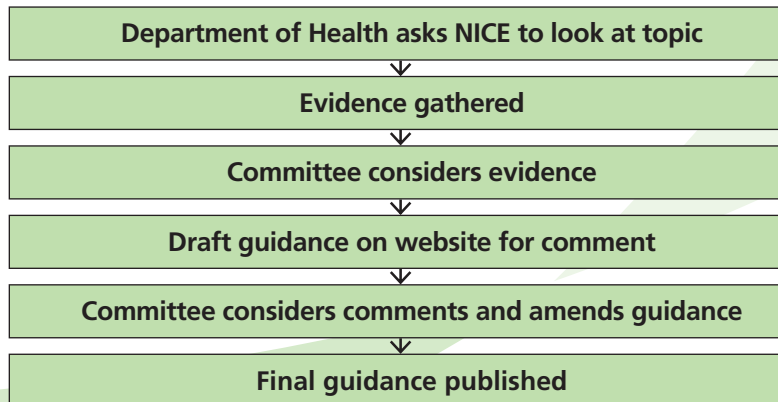
In order to make sure our standards represent good value for money, we use the best evidence to weigh up **benefits** and **costs**.

By using our guidance the NHS and local authorities can be sure they are getting good value for money.

We use rigorous processes

Our processes help to ensure our guidance is **consistent** and **reliable**. We follow these processes carefully to make sure we make the right decisions. For every topic we carry out a **thorough evaluation** of all the evidence and consider the views of a wide range of people from professionals and experts to patients and carers. The time it takes from the time we start work on a topic to when we publish our final guidance can vary.

A basic outline of our process is shown below.



We support organisations, education and research

As well as producing guidance, NICE works to help the **NHS** and **local authorities** put our guidance into practice. For example, we produce a template that helps local organisations calculate the savings and costs that the new guidance might incur.

We also work with **medical schools** to educate students about our guidance and the importance of using evidence in healthcare.

We need good evidence to do our job and we work with **research organisations** to ensure that health topics that have little evidence or perhaps have lots of conflicting evidence are investigated further.

Which NICE guidance applies?

Scotland

- Technology appraisals
- Interventional procedures

Northern Ireland

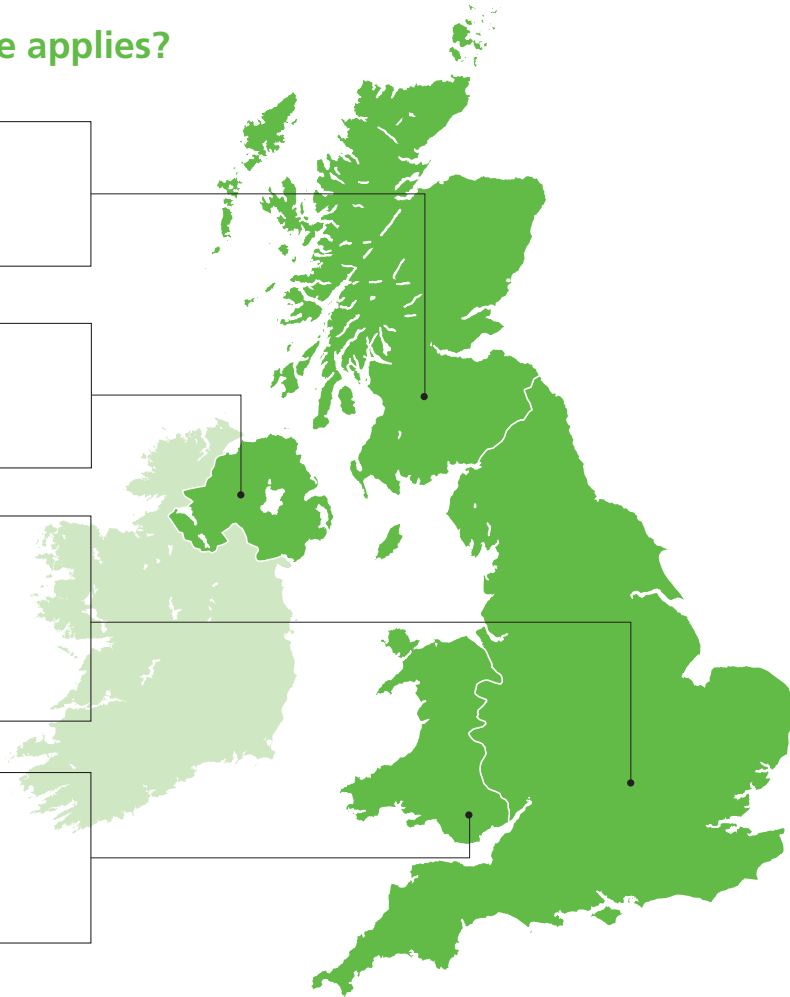
- Technology appraisals
- Interventional procedures

England

- Clinical guidelines
- Technology appraisals
- Interventional procedures
- Public health guidance

Wales

- Clinical guidelines
- Technology appraisals
- Interventional procedures



NICE is:

- **Independent**
- **National**
- **Evidence based**
- **Good value for the NHS**
- **Trusted by healthcare professionals**
- **Fair**

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