

## *National Institute for Clinical Excellence*

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### **PRESS RELEASE**

#### **New guideline for the NHS on the care of pregnant women**

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence and the National Collaborating Centre for Women's and Children's Health have published a guideline for the NHS in England and Wales on the routine care of healthy pregnant women. The guideline includes recommendations on:

- The provision of evidence-based information for pregnant women to support them in making informed decisions
- The number of antenatal appointments and what should happen at each appointment
- The use of ultrasound scanning
- The provision of screening for a range of conditions, including gestational diabetes, HIV and Down's syndrome

NICE is also publishing information for the public that explains the guideline and sets out what pregnant women can expect for the NHS.

**Andrea Sutcliffe, an executive director at NICE said:** "This guideline is based on the best available evidence and has been developed following a collaborative and consultative approach involving health professionals and service users. In addition, the information for the public will support health professionals in providing consistent, quality information for women."

The guideline is the first in a series that will be published by NICE aimed at improving maternity services and standardising care across the NHS in England and Wales, the Institute is also developing guidelines on caesarean section, care during labour, post natal care and post natal depression.

## Ends

## Notes to Editors

### About NICE

1. NICE is part of the NHS. It is the independent organisation responsible for providing national guidance on treatments and care for those using the NHS in England and Wales. Its guidance is for healthcare professionals and patients and their carers to help them make decisions about treatment and healthcare. For further information about NICE you can visit [www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk).
2. NICE produces guidance in three areas of health:
  - the use of new and existing medicines and treatments within the NHS in England and Wales – technology appraisals
  - the appropriate treatment and care of patients with specific diseases and conditions within the NHS in England and Wales – clinical guidelines.
  - whether interventional procedures used for diagnosis or treatment are safe enough and work well enough for routine use– interventional procedures.

NICE also funds three enquiries that undertake research into the way patients are treated to identify ways of improving the quality of care (the investigations are known as confidential enquiries).

3. NICE guidance and recommendations are prepared by independent groups that include professionals working in the NHS and people who are familiar with the issues affecting patients and carers.

### About clinical guidelines

4. Clinical guidelines are recommendations on the appropriate treatment and care of patients with specific diseases and conditions within the NHS in England and Wales. They sit alongside, but do not replace, the knowledge and skills of experienced health professionals.
5. Our clinical guidelines are developed by independent groups that include healthcare professionals working in the NHS, patients and people who are familiar with the issues affecting patients and carers. Professional and patient/carer groups whose members are likely to be affected by the guideline are able to submit information and comment on the recommendations before they are finalised.
6. The guideline on antenatal care was developed by the National Collaborating Centre for Women's and Children's Health, a professionally-led group with the experience and resources to develop guidance for the NHS on behalf of NICE. The National Collaborating Centre for Women & Children's Health is based at the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, and involves the following partners:
  - Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists
  - Faculty of Family Planning and Reproductive Health Care
  - Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health
  - Association for Genito-Urinary Medicine and Medical Society for the Study of Venereal Diseases
  - Royal College of Midwives.