

## PRESS RELEASE

### **NICE plans faster drugs guidance for the NHS**

NICE is now in discussion with the Department of Health over proposals for a revised process allowing more rapid appraisal of important new drugs and health technologies. In selected cases, this would allow NICE to issue guidance shortly after a drug becomes available for use in the NHS.

At a meeting on 21 September the NICE Board considered proposals for the more rapid development of advice to the NHS on important new drugs and health technologies. These proposals have today been submitted to the Department of Health for urgent discussion prior to a final decision on their adoption.

NICE is very conscious of its role in ensuring that the NHS has timely, good quality guidance when a new medicine is licensed for use in the UK, and fully understands the importance of this issue to patients and healthcare professionals.

**Andrew Dillon, Chief Executive of NICE said:** "We have listened to what patients and healthcare professionals have told us about the need for timely advice on the use of new medicines, particularly for life-threatening conditions such as cancer. We have responded by proposing a new, streamlined process for single drugs, and we think these proposals can make a real difference."

**Ends**

## Notes for editors

1. All medicines are assessed to determine whether they work and are safe before they are made available for widespread use in the UK.
2. Licensing is carried out by either the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) or the European Medicines Agency (EMA).
3. The MHRA and EMA can only start work when a manufacturer applies for a license for a new drug, or asks for a license on an existing drug to be extended.
4. NICE develops guidance for the NHS on significant new drugs once they have been licensed, to help ensure equal access for patients.

### **About NICE**

5. NICE is the independent organisation responsible for providing national guidance on promoting good health and preventing and treating ill health.