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**National Institute for  
Health and Clinical Excellence**

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **NICE issues update on familial breast cancer guideline to incorporate new evidence**

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) and the National Collaborating Centre for Primary Care have today (25 October 2006) published an update of its familial breast cancer guideline.

The updated version provides recommendations on the use of magnetic resonance scanning (MRI) for breast cancer surveillance. The update recommends yearly MRI screening for some women between the ages of 20 and 49 if they have a high risk of breast cancer, including women who have one of the faulty high-risk genes. All other recommendations on how health professionals should identify and care for women who are at risk of developing breast cancer because of a history of the condition in their family (familial breast cancer) remain the same.

**Andrew Dillon, NICE Chief Executive said:** “NICE always reviews its guidance to take into account new evidence. In 2004 we were aware of 3 major studies that were due to be published after our guidance was issued and took the decision to update our guidance once they were available. The studies show greater sensitivity of MRI in detecting breast cancer at an early stage in women who are at high risk of developing breast cancer due to their family history, and we have therefore recommended its use this group.”

**Ms Wendy Watson, Patient Representative and Director of Hereditary Breast Cancer Helpline, said:** “I am delighted with the updated NICE guideline. In the recent MARIBS trial, MRI has proved to be of enormous benefit to women who are at increased risk of breast cancer. The combination of MRI and mammography is especially valuable to young women with the faulty BRCA1 gene. Anything that offers more options to women at increased risk has to be a clear advantage.”

**End**

#### **Notes to Editors**

1. NICE is the independent organisation responsible for providing national guidance on the promotion of good health and the prevention and treatment of ill health.
2. NICE produces guidance in three areas of health:
  - **public health** – 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
  - **health technologies** – guidance on the use of new and existing medicines, treatments and procedures within the NHS
  - **clinical practice** – guidance on the appropriate treatment and care of people with specific diseases and conditions within the NHS.

#### **About the guidance**

3. The guidance is available at <http://www.nice.org.uk>