



International strategy for NICE

2022 to 2025

Contents

Executive summary	3
<hr/>	
Introduction	4
Why NICE engages internationally	4
Environmental and political context of the international strategy	6
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International strategic ambitions	8
Strategic ambition 1: Improving healthcare outcomes across the world	9
Objectives of strategic ambition 1: Improving healthcare outcomes across the world	10
Strategic ambition 2: Establishing international collaborative relationships	11
Objectives of strategic ambition 2: Establishing international collaborative relationships	12
<hr/>	
Delivery of strategic ambitions	13
Who will deliver these strategic ambitions	13
Resource requirements	14
We will know we have succeeded when...	14
The values and behaviours that guide our international work	14
<hr/>	
Next steps	15
<hr/>	
Find out more	16

Executive summary

This international strategy sets out the direction and priorities for NICE's international engagements and partnerships over the next 3 years.

It should be understood in the context of the overarching NICE strategy 2021 to 2026. It has also been developed in line with the relevant policy context, such as the UK Government's ambition of Global Britain, the Government's Integrated Review and commitment to contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

The strategy is organisation wide. That is, it covers the various engagements and collaborations that different teams at NICE have and will continue developing internationally.

The NICE strategy 2021 to 2026 recognises that "successful organisations learn from the environment in which they operate and adapt to the challenges they encounter". The COVID-19 pandemic and the realignment in government and health priorities have demonstrated that this environment is more global than ever. International cooperation and collaboration are therefore critical to achieve such purpose.

In this context, the strategic ambitions envisioned in this international strategy are:

1. Improving healthcare outcomes across the world.

NICE will contribute to improvements in health and care outcomes across the world by sharing the learning and expertise of NICE internationally, enhancing NICE's reputation as a world-leading institution.

2. Establishing international collaborative relationships.

NICE will develop a proactive international intelligence function by establishing collaborative relationships and projects aligned with NICE's priority areas.

We are deriving a set of objectives to contribute to the 2 strategic ambitions. The NICE International and Science Policy and Research Programme teams at NICE will act as key enablers of the international strategic ambitions set out within this strategy. NICE colleagues and teams will help to deliver elements of the strategy. NICE, as a world-leading organisation in health and care evidence-based decision-making, is committed to "making a significant impact on health and wellbeing across the UK and globally for many years to come" (NICE strategy 2021 to 2026). This international strategy aims to contribute to the delivery of this ambition.



Introduction

Why NICE engages internationally

The NHS is one of the oldest universal health systems in the world. However, as with any health system, it has not been free of challenges. In the early 1990s, an evidence overload and a lack of clear guidelines for healthcare professionals contributed to variation in access and quality of care – the so-called ‘postcode lottery’. This was accompanied by a slow uptake of innovative technologies and practices, with rising costs, and growing public concern and an increase in media criticism. NICE was created in 1999 to provide evidence-based recommendations on treatments that should be used within the NHS, and produce accompanying clinical guidelines. The organisation sought to reduce the variation of quality and access to treatment across the country.

The UK experience is comparable to other healthcare systems aiming to reform their own services, and/or aspiring to achieve universal health coverage. These systems can be public or private. The challenges and pressures are not specific to any of them. But the context plays a significant role in how any changes might be implemented.

NICE is a fundamental part of the wide and complex health and care system in England. As an organisation, NICE has been providing evidence-based health policy, technology assessment and guideline recommendations

While recognising that there is no ‘one-size that fits all’, many elements of NICE’s methodology, process and products can be relevant, including mechanisms that link budget allocation with improved service delivery and better health outcomes.

for over 22 years. The way in which NICE guidance is produced is critical to its success. All guidance is developed using rigorous methods and processes that include widespread public consultation and early engagement with stakeholders including the life sciences industry.

It is this role and extensive experience of fulfilling it within the UK that places NICE in an excellent position to share its expertise with other countries, while learning from partners across the world.

NICE's international relationships are always 2-way. While NICE has wide experience that it shares, NICE also learns from others' experiences. It leverages expertise from other countries to support methodological development and makes best use of its resources by using research and health technology assessment (HTA) outputs developed by others to inform its work. NICE has longstanding involvement in collaborative international research projects, such as the Innovative Medicines Initiative and Horizon 2020/Horizon Europe. It actively participates in international networks such as the International Network of Agencies for Health Technology Assessment (INAHTA), Guidelines International Network (GIN), Health Technology Assessment international (HTAi), and International Society for

Pharmacoeconomic Outcomes Research (ISPOR). Alongside these formal projects and networks also exist strategic partnerships with other international agencies and informal links to many others. There are individualities in all healthcare systems and decision contexts that mean that methods and processes must be adapted to that context. However, the global nature of healthcare, health technologies and scientific methodology means that there are also similarities that can be capitalised on. We can work together to tackle and anticipate common challenges and inform future healthcare initiatives.

We are extremely thankful to all who have contributed so far and will help to shape the strategic direction of international engagements at NICE over the next 3 years.



Environmental and political context of the international strategy



The NICE strategy 2021 to 2026 recognises that the world around us is changing. New treatments, practices and technologies are emerging at a rapid pace including innovations for the major diseases that drive most morbidity and mortality, predictive and monitoring technologies, genomics, digital health technologies and data revolution. Although challenges in healthcare are wide-

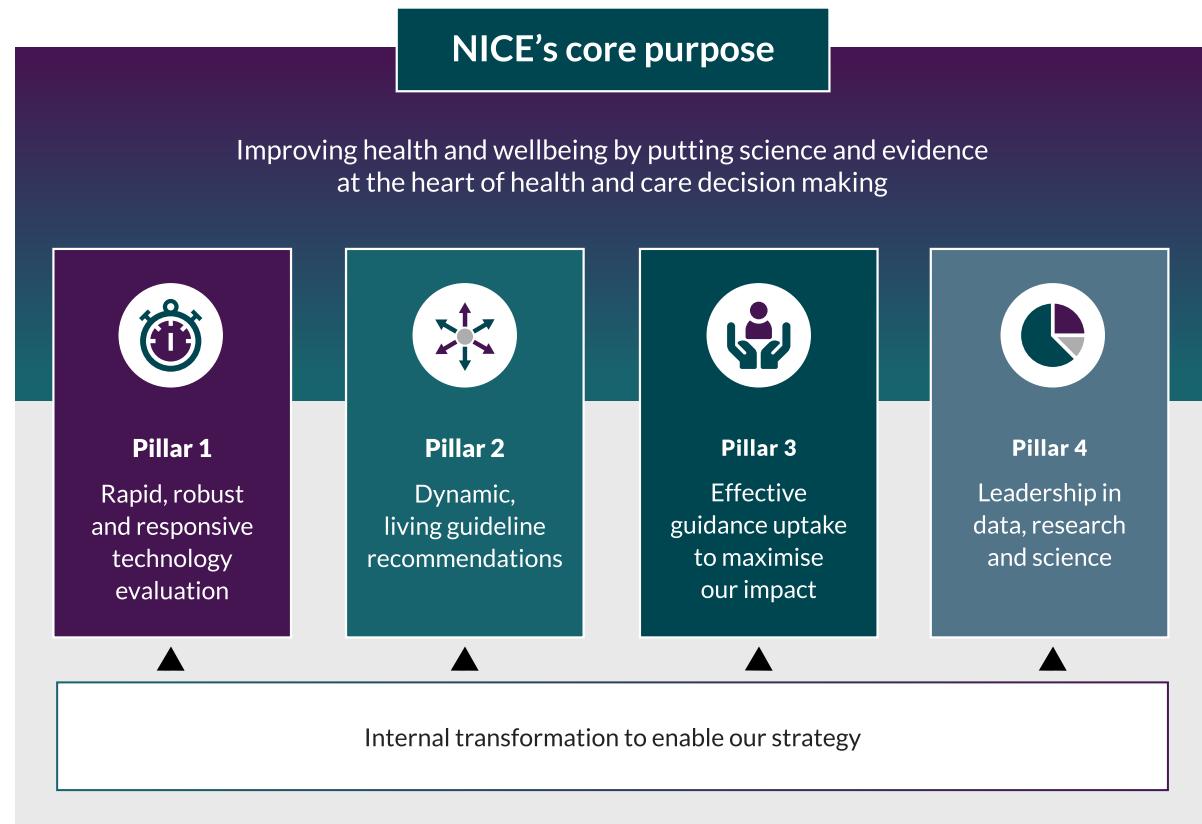
ranging and vary according to the country's context, income, healthcare budget and the maturity of the healthcare system, the impact of rising costs associated with innovative technologies and digitalisation is not unique to the UK. Ensuring that healthcare budgets are spent effectively is crucial to creating and maintaining a sustainable healthcare system, which also encourages innovation.

There is a need to ensure that health and care professionals can easily access up-to-date information to support their decision-making. It is also important to inform and incorporate the public in decisions about their care. The rise of non-communicable diseases is a common challenge. Undoubtedly, the COVID-19 pandemic is having a detrimental impact on healthcare systems around the world, with fragile healthcare systems suffering the most. Collaboration between jurisdictions has become more important than ever. Reductions in aid funding and increases in poverty and health inequalities mean that countries around the world need to focus on strengthening their healthcare systems to make them more resilient. Social care is also receiving more attention than ever before, with countries recognising the need to invest in both health and social care systems.

Overview of the NICE strategy 2021 to 2026

All these factors highlight the need for shared learning on a global scale to contribute to health systems strengthening, as recognised in the UK Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy, which states that: "We will support others to become more self-sufficient through trade and economic growth and increase our ability to achieve long-term change through combining our diplomatic and development expertise". NICE is well positioned to share and learn from others internationally to achieve the common aim of putting evidence at the heart of health and care decision-making.

This international strategy for NICE has been developed in response to this environmental and political context and will contribute to each of the 4 strategic pillars of the NICE strategy 2021 to 2026. These pillars all emphasise the global nature of the challenge and expert role of NICE, underpinning the need for NICE to engage internationally.



International strategic ambitions

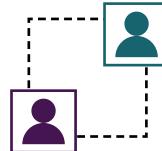


Our international strategic ambitions over the next 3 years are:



1. Improving healthcare outcomes across the world.

NICE will contribute to improvements in health and care outcomes across the world by sharing the learning and expertise of NICE internationally, enhancing NICE's reputation as a world-leading institution.



2. Establishing international collaborative relationships.

NICE will develop a proactive international intelligence function by establishing collaborative relationships and projects aligned with NICE's priority areas.

Strategic ambition 1:

Improving healthcare outcomes across the world.

This strategic ambition aims to specifically contribute to:

- 1. improvements in health and social care outcomes across the world, by supporting organisations worldwide to:**
 - a) allocate limited healthcare resources through embedding HTA and health technology management. These functions aim to help manage rising costs and promote innovation in a cost-effective, transparent, equitable and sustainable way.
 - b) improve the quality of care and reduce variation of access in health and social care services through the development of evidence-based guidance, standards and indicators that are implementable in local settings.
 - c) promote inclusivity of key stakeholders in health and social care decision-making thorough participation and engagement, as well as the development of scientific networks.

- 2. NHS and UK government global health ambitions.**

NICE is well positioned to champion the NHS partnership model and brand abroad, be an ambassador of the UK life sciences ecosystem and to facilitate conversations at a government-to-government level, contributing to improvement in relationship building, development and trade through the lens of health. NICE can also play a strategic role working with the Department of Health and Social Care and the Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office, aligning to their priorities when relevant, including the government's Integrated Review.
- 3. NICE's learnings from international projects and transformational people strategy.**

Importantly, increased international engagement will provide NICE staff the opportunity to enhance their collaboration skills and will contribute to their ambitions, motivation and satisfaction, while celebrating diversity and an inclusive approach.



Objectives of strategic ambition 1:



*System partners include NHS Consortium for Global Health, the NHS Export Collaborative or the World Health Organization DECIDE hub, Health Education England, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, the International Decision Support Initiative, the Academic Health Science Networks, the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists among others.

Strategic ambition 2: Establishing international collaborative relationships.

NICE will develop a proactive international intelligence function by establishing collaborative relationships and projects aligned with NICE's priority areas.

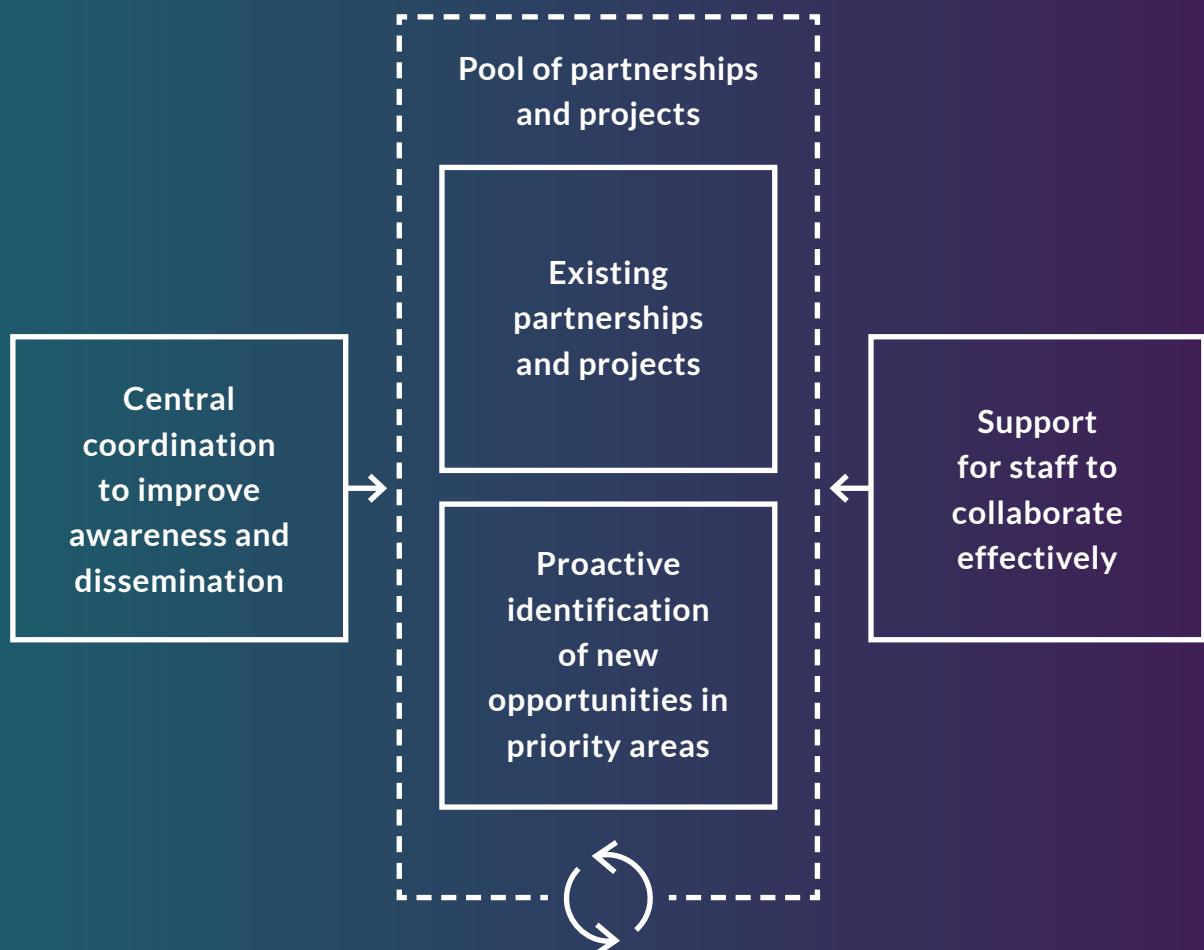
NICE engages in partnerships with other HTA agencies and guideline development groups internationally. These partnerships include externally funded research projects, informal information exchanges and formal partnership agreements. Engagements include sharing best practice and collaboration on new methodological and process developments.

NICE will continue its existing collaborative partnerships and projects. It will expand this portfolio by proactively identifying new opportunities for partnerships and projects aligned to NICE's priority areas.

NICE will implement central coordination of the projects to improve the visibility of our international collaborations across the Institute and the awareness of NICE staff to collaboration as a way of working.

NICE will provide support for staff who want to collaborate so that they can maximise the benefits from collaboration.

How NICE will implement strategic ambition 2:



Regular review of partnerships and projects to ensure they continue to meet business needs

Objectives of strategic ambition 2:



Delivery of strategic ambitions

Who will deliver these strategic ambitions.

Two NICE teams (NICE International and the Science Policy and Research Programme) will act as key enablers of the international strategic ambitions set out within this strategy.



NICE International provides advisory services to organisations, ministries and government agencies internationally to support the use of evidence-based decision-making in health and social care systems. They operate on a not-for-profit, cost-recovery basis. There is a core team dedicated to NICE International's work. They are supported by the wider organisation, as well as external collaborators. NICE International will lead on strategic ambition 1. The mission, vision and the contributions of NICE International's advisory services will directly contribute to achieving this strategic ambition.



The Science Policy and Research (SP&R) Programme works with internal and external partners on scientific and research activities related to the work of NICE. One strand of activity within the SP&R Programme is international projects. This includes a portfolio of externally funded research projects, for example the Innovative Medicines Initiative and Horizon 2020 funded projects such as European Health Data Evidence Network, NEURONET and HTx. This also supports NICE's international collaborative activities and partnerships. The SP&R Programme and NICE International will lead on strategic ambition 2.



Resource requirements

In order to deliver our service offering in a sustainable manner, NICE International is required to operate on a not-for-profit, cost-recovery basis. This is in line with NICE's Regulations (2013), which allows for operating on a commercial basis. NICE International will aim to recover the cost of its advisory role when working with international organisations and sharing NICE's learnings and expertise, under strategic ambition 1. NICE's Science Policy and Research Programme includes some resources to support international collaboration.



We will know we have succeeded when...

We have made meaningful contributions to improvements in health outcomes and evidence-based decision-making in health and social care across the world. We will work to derive metrics to track the impact and value of our international work, which will inform the measures of success to monitor these ambitions. These should relate to contributions that NICE makes in the global health environment through its collaborations, contributions to UK Global health ambitions, and contributions to NICE's reputation, learnings and intelligence and staff motivation and satisfaction.



The values and behaviours that guide our international work

We will embed NICE values and behaviours in our international work. In addition, NICE will commit to international principles and standards such as the principle of do no harm, avoiding imposing our views when working with other countries and acknowledging and recognising that everyone has something to share and learn from each other.



NICE International participation at HTA symposium in Panama (March 2020) organised by the UK Department for International Trade and British Embassy in Panama

Next steps

This international strategy will be underpinned by a detailed action plan with deliverables for the next 3 years. It will feed into NICE's annual business plan objectives.

We will collaborate with internal and external partners working in global health and international collaborations to deliver the objectives covered in the plan.

We will monitor the delivery of the plan, recognising the dynamic and changing context in which we operate. We will evolve the actions as needed with the aim to continue delivering the strategic ambitions set out in this strategy.

For more information about our international activities

Visit the [NICE International webpage](#)

Email niceinternational@nice.org.uk

View the [SP&R international grant funded projects](#)