

Interventional Procedures Programme

Terms of reference for Specialist Advisers

Aims of the Interventional Procedures Programme

NICE's IP Programme assesses the efficacy and safety of interventional procedures, with the aim of protecting patients and helping clinicians, healthcare organisations and the NHS to introduce procedures appropriately.

Interventional procedures are those used for diagnosis or treatments that involve incision, puncture, or entry into a body cavity or the use of electromagnetic or acoustic energy.

Interventional Procedures Advisory Committee

NICE guidance on interventional procedures is developed by an independent Interventional Procedures Advisory Committee (IPAC) made up of professionals working in the NHS and people who are familiar with the issues affecting patients and carers. The committee is chaired by Professor Bruce Campbell and meets monthly.

The Interventional Procedures Advisory Committee is assisted by Specialist Advisers who provide advice and informed opinion about interventional procedures. Specialist Advisers are clinicians nominated by the professional organisations whose members use particular procedures. Specialist Advisers are selected because of their knowledge, special interest and experience of the clinical field: their advice complements findings from research and aids IPAC in its decision making.

Clinicians and others are able to notify procedures to NICE via our website: more information on this process is available at www.nice.org.uk/ip. NICE consults publicly on all guidance before it is issued. For further details of our process please refer to the Interventional Procedures Process Manual which can be accessed via <http://www.nice.org.uk/aboutnice/howwework/developingniceinterventionalprocedures/interventionalproceduresprogrammemanual/interventionalproceduresprogrammemanual.jsp?domedia=1&mid=96186DBC-19B9-E0B5-D4B7ABF517DFC88B>

Specialist Adviser Appointments

Specialist Advisers are appointed to the programme for a term of 3 years. This term is renewable and will automatically be restarted every time the adviser is re-nominated. Specialist Advisers are asked to complete and return a personal data form providing details of name, job title, mailing address, email, telephone, Specialist Societies and specialist interests.

In line with NICE's aim to be transparent the name of each Specialist Adviser and their Specialist Society will be published on the website (www.nice.org.uk/aboutnice/howwework/developingniceinterventionalprocedures/specialistadvisors/specialist_advisors.jsp) and in the procedure overview. A copy of each completed piece of specialist advice is sent to the nominating specialist society if requested.

In order to comply with the Data Protection Act, Advisers are also asked to sign and return a Data Protection form which agrees that their details may be held electronically.

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Specialist Advisers should be aware that full implementation of the Freedom of Information Act may oblige us to release this Specialist Advice from 2005 but requests will be considered on a case by case basis.

The role of Specialist Advisers

New procedures often have potential risks and benefits that are not yet fully described in the scientific literature. Specialist Advisers provide insight into these aspects of a procedure, sometimes supported by their accounts of clinical experience which complement the often limited published evidence.

Specialist Advisers may be asked to advise the IP Programme team and/or IPAC on the following aspects of individual procedures within their area of expertise or knowledge:

- the relevance to the Programme's remit of procedures notified to the Programme
- preparation of the procedure's scope and overview
- the development of an audit tool for the procedure where appropriate
- the development of a lay version of the guidance.

As a rule, requests for specialist advice to each individual Adviser are infrequent. Requests for Specialist Advice are sent by email in the form of a questionnaire. Specialist Advisers may either complete the proforma online via www.nice.org.uk/ipsaq or using the attached pro forma (Word document). Specialist Advisers are given the option to receive this pro forma in hard copy if they prefer.

Specialist Advisers are asked to complete the questionnaire within two weeks of the request date. We ask that Specialist Advisers answer the questions based on their current knowledge; there is no need to undertake any specific research or review of the procedure. However additional literature may also be submitted.

We acknowledge that Specialist Advisers may not be aware of a procedure or may not feel confident that they have adequate knowledge or experience in a particular procedure to provide advice. In these cases we would ask the Specialist Adviser to tell us immediately (within 2 working days if possible).

Occasionally we may wish to contact Specialist Advisers for further advice, either by correspondence or by telephone. Exceptionally NICE may ask Specialist Advisers to attend a meeting of IPAC to offer advice about a procedure.

Conflicts of Interest

Specialist Advisers to the NICE Interventional Procedures Programme should note that under NICE's Code of Practice for Declaring and Dealing with Conflicts of Interests¹, if they have a **personal specific pecuniary interest** (see section 2 of Conflicts of Interest policy) or a **personal family specific interest** (see section 3 of policy) in a procedure, they can offer advice to the Committee on that procedure at the discretion of the Committee Chair. The purpose of this is to preserve transparency and ensure that the development of NICE's Interventional Procedures guidance continues to be informed by the best available clinical advice.

¹ Introduced in May 2007
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