NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CARE EXCELLENCE

NICE indicator guidance

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# Indicator NM169

# The contractor establishes and maintains a register of:

# 1. Patients with a clinical diagnosis of COPD before *(start date)*, and

2. Patients with a clinical diagnosis of COPD on or after *(start date)* whose diagnosis has been confirmed by a quality assured post bronchodilator spirometry FEV1/FVC ratio below 0.7 between 3 months before or 3 months after diagnosis.

# Indicator type

General practice indicator suitable for use in the QOF.

# Introduction

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is a term for a group of lung conditions that cause breathing difficulties due to narrowing of the airways. Symptoms include breathlessness, a persistent cough and persistent wheezing and frequent chest infections. Symptoms tend to get worse slowly over time, however treatment can control them. Symptoms may also suddenly get much worse for a period, known as an exacerbation. [British Lung Foundation](https://statistics.blf.org.uk/copd?_ga=2.219875801.1367299004.1527163268-1758129798.1527163268) estimate that around 2% of over 40s are diagnosed with COPD, and that prevalence is growing. [QOF data for 2017/18](https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/quality-and-outcomes-framework-achievement-prevalence-and-exceptions-data/2017-18) shows around 1.1 million people in England are currently on a general practice COPD register.

# Rationale

The aim of this indicator is to encourage practices to maintain a register of patients with a diagnosis of COPD and to use that register of patients to inform the care they deliver. The register can also provide a denominator to inform additional indicators that could be developed.

This indicator also aims to prospectively encourage objective testing to support diagnosis of COPD. Linking diagnosis and objective testing to entry onto the QOF COPD disease register aims to contribute towards a reduction in both misdiagnosis and the risk of overtreatment in people with COPD.

# Source guidance

[Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease in over 16s: diagnosis and management](https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng115) (2018) NICE guideline NG115, recommendations 1.1.4 and 1.1.5.

# Specification

A register of people with a diagnosis of COPD.

Exclusions: None.

# Further information

This is NICE indicator guidance, which is part of the [NICE menu of indicators](https://www.nice.org.uk/Standards-and-Indicators/index). This document does not represent formal NICE guidance.