NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CARE EXCELLENCE

NICE indicator guidance

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# Indicator NM170

The percentage of patients with COPD on the register, who have had a review in the preceding 12 months, including a record of the number of exacerbations and an assessment of breathlessness using the Medical Research Council dyspnoea scale.

# 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

This indicator aims to encourage the use of recording of number of exacerbations and assessments of breathlessness in annual COPD reviews. Understanding the frequency of exacerbations can help when creating personalized management plans, identifying triggers and avoiding future exacerbations.

# Source guidance

[Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease in over 16s: diagnosis and management](https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng115) (2018) NICE guideline NG115, recommendation 1.1.3

# Specification

Numerator: The number of patients in the denominator who have had a review in the preceding 12 months that included a record of the number of exacerbations and an assessment of breathlessness using the Medical Research Council dyspnoea scale.

Denominator: The number of patients with COPD on the register (see NICE indicator NM169).

Calculation: (Numerator/denominator) \* 100.

Exclusions: None.

Minimum population: The indicator would be appropriate to assess performance at individual general practice level.

# 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.