**NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CARE EXCELLENCE**

NICE indicator guidance

Date first published on NICE menu: August 2019

Last update: N/A

# Indicator NM175

The percentage of patients with a new diagnosis of hypertension in the preceding 12 months who have been screened for hazardous drinking using the FAST or AUDIT-C tool in the 3 months before or after the date of entry on the hypertension register.

# Indicator type

General practice indicator suitable for use in the QOF.

# Introduction

Alcohol is a cause of significant public health burden but use is widespread amongst most groups of society. Alcohol is the leading cause of ill-health, early mortality and disability in those aged 15-49 years of age ([NHS Digital 2017](https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/statistics-on-alcohol/statistics-on-alcohol-england-2017)). Harmful drinking is associated with multiple physical and mental health problems.

People with hypertension are at increased risk of developing cardiovascular disease (CVD). CVD remains the second highest cause of premature death and is a major contributor to heath inequalities ([NHS England 2017](https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/next-steps-on-the-nhs-five-year-forward-view/)). The risk of CVD can be reduced by treating hypertension and reducing lifestyle risks such as alcohol consumption. Alcohol use can make controlling blood pressure levels more difficult.

# Rationale

This indicator is intended to identify those people who have been screened for hazardous drinking in order to more effectively treat their hypertension. Tools such as AUDIT-C and FAST can help to identify people that may not be alcohol dependent but would benefit from an reducing their alcohol consumption.

# Source guidance

[Hypertension in adults: diagnosis and management](https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng136) (2016) NICE guideline NG136, recommendations 1.4.1 and 1.4.3.

[Alcohol-use disorders: prevention](https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph24) (2010) NICE guideline PH24, recommendation 9

# Specification

Numerator: The number of patients in the denominator who have been screened for hazardous drinking using the FAST or AUDIT-C tool in the 3 months before or after the date of entry on the hypertension register.

Denominator: The number of patients with a new diagnosis of hypertension in the preceding 12 months.

Calculation: (Numerator/denominator) \* 100.

Exclusions: People with an existing diagnosis of an alcohol related disease or disorder.

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.