

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CARE EXCELLENCE

Indicators for the NICE menu for the QOF

Indicator area: Asthma

Indicator: NM102

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The percentage of patients with asthma aged 14 or over and who have not attained the age of 20, on the register, in whom there is a record of smoking status in the preceding 12 months.

Please note: NICE inherited this indicator when it became responsible for managing the process of developing and maintaining QOF indicators in 2009.

Introduction

Asthma is a long-term condition affecting the airways in the lungs in children, young people and adults. Symptoms include breathlessness, tightness in the chest, coughing and wheezing. In 2012 in the UK, 5.4 million people received treatment for asthma: 1.1 million children (1 in 11) and 4.3 million adults (1 in 12). Asthma results in over 1000 deaths a year, of which around 90% may be preventable. Almost 40% of these deaths are in people aged under 75.¹

Direct or passive exposure to cigarette smoke adversely affects quality of life, lung function, need for rescue medications for acute episodes of asthma and long-term control with inhaled corticosteroids. Uptake of smoking in teenagers increases the risks of persistent asthma.

Rationale

This indicator requires smoking status to be recorded annually for people with asthma who are aged between 14 and 20 years. The aim is to prevent smoking and to encourage smoking cessation in young people with asthma.

¹ National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (2013) [Asthma](#) NICE quality standard 25

The NICE-accredited SIGN guideline states that adolescents with asthma should be asked if they smoke personally; adolescents are defined as aged between 10 and 19 years. This indicator adopts an age range of 14–20 years, because adolescents may be reluctant to admit to smoking if their parents are present in the consultation – when they are over 14 years, young people are less likely to have their parents with them in the consultation and issues around openness may be less important. Because many young people take up smoking at an early age, it is justifiable to ask about smoking on an annual basis in this age group.²

This indicator provides an incentive for practices to take a proactive approach to identify young people with asthma who smoke. These young people can then be offered advice on how to stop and be encouraged to use local NHS smoking cessation services.

Source guidance and recommendations

- [British guideline on the management of asthma](#) (2014) SIGN guideline 141
 - Adolescents with asthma should be asked if they smoke personally. If they do and wish to stop, they should be offered advice on how to stop and encouraged to use local NHS smoking cessation services.

Further information

This is NICE indicator guidance for QOF, which is part of the NICE menu of indicators. This document does not represent formal NICE guidance. The NICE menu of indicators for QOF is available online at:

<http://www.nice.org.uk/standards-and-indicators/qofindicators>

² 2015/16 [GMS Contract QOF Guidance](#)