

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CARE EXCELLENCE

Scope for guideline update (starting 2026)

Suspected sepsis in under 16s: recognition, diagnosis and early management

NICE is updating its guideline on [suspected sepsis in under 16s \(NG254\)](#). The update will be developed using the methods and processes in [developing NICE guidelines: the manual](#).

Who the guideline update covers

The update will cover the same groups as the current guideline, that is, babies, children and young people under 16 (not pregnant or recently pregnant) with suspected sepsis.

Equality considerations

A new equality and health inequalities assessment that is relevant to this update has been completed.

Settings

In-hospital and ambulance settings Activities, services or aspects of care covered by the guideline update

We will consider making new recommendations or updating existing recommendations on:

- procalcitonin testing to guide clinical decision making
- indicators of organ hypoperfusion
- volume and type of intravenous fluid therapy
- peripheral administration of intravenous vasopressors.

Review questions

The national paediatric early warning system (NPEWS) will be included in all existing recommendations in [NG254](#) for which it is relevant.

Additionally, we have identified the following review questions.

Procalcitonin

1. What is the clinical and cost effectiveness of serum procalcitonin measurement with standard care to support decision making regarding the treatment of sepsis compared to standard care alone in people aged under 16 with suspected sepsis?

Intravenous fluids

2. What is the most clinical and cost-effective intravenous fluid for resuscitation of people aged under 16 with suspected sepsis?
3. What is the most clinically and cost-effective volume and rate of administration for Intravenous fluid for resuscitation in people aged under 16 with suspected sepsis?

Hypoperfusion

4. In people aged under 16 with suspected sepsis, what indicators of organ hypoperfusion should be used (in addition to NPEWS) to guide the administration of intravenous fluids for resuscitation?

Peripheral administration of vasopressors

5. In people aged under 16 with suspected sepsis, how safe is the peripheral administration of intravenous vasopressors compared to central line administration?

Economic aspects

We will take economic aspects into account when making recommendations.

For each review question (or key areas in the scope), we will review the

economic evidence and, where appropriate, carry out economic modelling and analyses, to assess the value for money (cost effectiveness) of interventions. This is done using an NHS perspective.

NICE guidance and quality standards that may be affected by this update

- [Suspected sepsis in over 16s](#) (2025) NICE Quality standard QS213
- [Procalcitonin testing for diagnosing and monitoring sepsis](#) (2015) NICE HealthTech guidance HTG386
- [Intravenous fluid therapy in children and young people in hospital](#) (2015) NICE guideline NG29

Further information

The guideline update is expected to be published in February 2027

To follow the progress of the update, see the [guideline in development page](#).

Our website has information about [how NICE guidelines are developed](#).

NICE guidelines cover health and care in England. Decisions on how they apply in other UK countries are made by ministers in the [Welsh Government](#), [Scottish Government](#) and [Northern Ireland Executive](#).

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