

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CARE EXCELLENCE

Scope for disease-specific reference case extension

Management of overweight and obesity

Background

There are several new medicines and health technologies scheduled to be evaluated by NICE that are indicated for people living with overweight or obesity. These technologies potentially provide substantial benefits that may improve health for people with these conditions, but come at a significant cost to the NHS. It is important to ensure the benefits and costs of these technologies are measured accurately and consistently.

[NICE's reference case](#) for economic evaluation specifies the methods NICE considers appropriate for guidelines, technology appraisals and health technology evaluations. In line with NICE's position statement on the use of disease-specific reference models in economic evaluations, the obesity reference case extension will specify NICE's preferred methods for economic analyses of technologies that help in the treatment of overweight or obesity, and in the reduction of weight-related complications.

Aim

The aim of the obesity reference case extension is to set out agreed standards for how technologies for overweight and obesity should be modelled, to encourage consistency and accuracy across different types of NICE guidance.

Populations included and excluded

The reference case extension will cover technologies for the management of overweight or obesity for adults and reduction of weight-related comorbidities.

People with and without pre-existing weight-related comorbidities, such as type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease, are included.

The reference case extension will not cover:

- the prevention of overweight or obesity in people of normal weight
- treatment of overweight or obesity in children.

This is because, at this time, there is not enough evidence to support economic modelling for the population of children with overweight and obesity. In particular, there is not enough evidence for the risk equations that explore the link between weight loss and long-term outcomes in young people aged 12 to 17 years and utility estimates that adequately capture the full impact on their quality of life (see the [section on advice in NICE's terminated technology appraisal on semaglutide for managing overweight and obesity in young people aged 12 to 17 years](#)). So, there is a high degree of uncertainty in the evidence base that would be used to support an economic model that meets the NICE reference case.

Equality considerations

NICE will carry out an equality and health inequalities impact assessment during development of this reference case extension.

The assessment will list equality issues that are identified and should be considered when applying the reference case extension.

Methods

To inform this disease-specific reference case extension, we are conducting a pragmatic review of recent health economic modelling approaches in obesity (including those informing NICE guidance), to identify best practice.

Where relevant, we will incorporate or cross-refer to [NICE's economic model concept for evaluating metabolic dysfunction-associated steatohepatitis \(MASH\) therapies](#).

We will hold virtual workshops with the following groups:

NICE scope: obesity reference case extension

Page 2 of 4

- clinical experts and patient group representatives
- health economic modellers
- industry stakeholders
- NHS commissioners.

During these workshops, we will discuss the clinical relevance of the economic modelling structures, assumptions and inputs used to date and provide an opportunity to discuss preferred approaches and model inputs to be included in this reference case extension. Areas of uncertainty will be highlighted to encourage further research.

A stakeholder consultation of the reference case extension will be conducted prior to publication.

Where supported by evidence or expert opinion, the reference case extension will include the following:

- population strata and subgroups
- interventions, including medicines, digital technologies, surgery and behavioural interventions. This will include standard care, background treatments and relevant comparators.
- risk factors modifiable by treatments and risk equations, where appropriate
- model structure and health states
- events to be included in the model, for example hospitalisations or onset of comorbidities.

Related published NICE guidance

Guidelines

- [Overweight and obesity management](#) (2025) NICE guideline NG246
- [Type 2 diabetes in adults: management](#) (2022) NICE guideline NG28 (update in development)
- [Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease \(NAFLD\): assessment and management](#) (2016) NICE guideline NG49 (update in development)

Technology appraisals (TA)

- [Semaglutide for preventing major cardiovascular events in people with cardiovascular disease and overweight or obesity \[ID6441\]](#) NICE TA GID-TA11544, including a review of TA875 and TA910 (in development, publication expected May 2026)
- [Tirzepatide for managing overweight and obesity](#) (2024) NICE TA1026
- [Tirzepatide for treating type 2 diabetes](#) (2023) NICE TA924
- [Semaglutide for managing overweight and obesity](#) (2023) NICE TA875
- [Liraglutide for managing overweight and obesity](#) (2020) NICE TA664
- [Naltrexone–bupropion for managing overweight and obesity](#) (2017) NICE TA494

Health technology evaluations (HTE)

- [Digital technologies for delivering multidisciplinary weight-management services: early value assessment](#) (2024) NICE HTE14

Interventional procedures guidance (IPG)

- [Endoscopic sleeve gastroplasty for obesity](#) (2024) NICE IPG783
- [Single-anastomosis duodeno-ileal bypass with sleeve gastrectomy for treating morbid obesity](#) (2016) NICE IPG569
- [Laparoscopic gastric plication for the treatment of severe obesity](#) (2012) NICE IPG432