NICE National Institute for Health and Care Excellence

NICE visualisation of treatment options incorporating technology appraisals: interim process guide

NICE process and methods
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1 Introduction

1.1 What this guide is for

This process guide explains how the following treatment option summaries were developed:

- Type 2 diabetes in adults: management – factors to take into account when choosing, reviewing and changing medicines.
- Lung cancer treatment pathways.
- Multiple sclerosis disease modifying therapies (in development, publication to be confirmed).

It explains how these products were developed in an open, transparent, and timely way, with appropriate expert input. Producing quality-assured products that can be used by healthcare professionals and patients and that can be rapidly updated as new technologies become available. The NICE Centre for Health Technology Evaluation (CHTE) can use these products to support the technology appraisal (TA) process and to ensure that recommendations within the same clinical topic area are coherent with one another.

1.2 Background

The NICE strategy sets out an ambitious vision which includes providing dynamic, living guideline recommendations that are useful, useable and rapidly updated.

NICE recommendations often cover the safe, efficient and effective use of medicines and technologies. These recommendations are spread across NICE guidelines and NICE TAs, and there can be many of these within a clinical topic area. This can make it difficult for people to locate all the information they need from NICE when they are deciding on treatments or looking at placement of a new technology within an existing pathway.

Using NICE guidance can be particularly difficult when:

- a new technology is covered in a TA but not in a relevant NICE guideline and so its

position in the care pathway is unclear

- there are multiple recommendations for technologies that could all be used at a single point in the care pathway
- there is a high volume of innovative technologies in a fast-moving clinical topic area.

Treatment option summaries present NICE recommendations from various sources in a structured, coordinated and clear way. They can be rapidly updated, supporting NICE's living content ambition.

2 Treatment option summaries

2.1 Aims

NICE treatment option summaries support the delivery of NICE's strategic objective to provide dynamic, living guideline recommendations that are useful, useable and used, while being rapidly updated by:

- Collating NICE TA and guideline recommendations in fast moving, high priority clinical topic areas and providing an interim solution until digital living guidelines are a reality.
- Presenting the recommended treatment options visually, in a way that is easy for people to understand.
- Providing a structured visual tool which can be used by CHTE to support the TA process and to ensure that recommendations within the same clinical topic area, are coherent with one another.
- Rapidly incorporating newly recommended technologies into existing treatment option summaries to support uptake and shared decision-making.

2.2 What are treatment option summaries?

NICE treatment option summaries differ from conventional NICE visual summaries because they present both TA recommendations and guideline recommendations in the same product or summarise TA options at different decision points.

Treatment option summaries vary depending on the relevant NICE content, user needs or commissioning arrangements. For example, the lung cancer product is a visualisation of treatment options in a patient journey of care by bringing together NICE recommendations in an integrated way, whereas the multiple sclerosis product summarises TA recommended treatment options in a high priority area of clinical care. These products can support user decision-making by:

- showing the different options available at a single decision point in the topic area
- showing which options may be the most appropriate for a specific population

- providing additional clinical information to support clinicians when discussing treatment options with patients (for example, highlighting the factors that may help people to choose between technologies)
- providing information to support shared decisions between patients and clinicians about treatment options when there are preference-sensitive decisions to be made.

2.3 Who are treatment option summaries for?

- Healthcare professionals.
- Integrated care systems.
- Patients and their families and carers.

2.4 Key activities

- Choosing the topic.
- Developing the product:
  - scoping
  - production: identifying and summarising the recommended treatment options and presenting the information in a suitable format
  - quality assurance
  - publication.
- Reviewing and updating treatment option summaries.

3 Who is involved in producing NICE treatment option summaries?

3.1 The development team

The development team is made up of pharmacists, technical, publishing, digital living guidelines, project and administrative staff from across NICE. The current process is led by the medicines optimisation team. A senior member of this team such as an associate director of medicines optimisation or senior medicines adviser has overall responsibility for developing these products. They are responsible for:

- developing and reviewing this process guide
- selecting and prioritising potential topics
- scoping and developing treatment option summaries in line with this process guide
- setting up or maintaining the clinical expert group, if required for each topic, and working with experts to ensure that the content of the product is relevant and useful
- providing quality assurance for the development process and the treatment option summaries.

The development team work with other NICE teams to:

- discuss topic selection and prioritisation
- check for overlaps with other NICE work
- recruit specialist members for the project group
- coordinate work with the guideline committee (or the appraisal committee if applicable) and key stakeholders
- provide additional clinical input when needed
- ensure products are clear and useful.

3.2 Expert input

Expert input is required to peer review each treatment options summary to ensure relevance in a clinical setting. This is provided by experts with experience of the topic, usually guideline committee members with additional experts when required. They include healthcare professionals, people who use healthcare services, and external stakeholders (such as NHS England specialised commissioning). The experts are asked to:

- answer clinical questions and advise on the positioning of technologies
- comment on the accuracy of the summary of treatment options and whether it reflects current clinical practice
- comment on the clarity and presentation of the visual product.

4 Conflicts of interest

Experts comply with the NICE conflicts of interest policy for advisory committees.

5 Topic identification, selection and prioritisation

The 3 test topics have been identified because each concern high priority clinical areas where there is an existing guideline and numerous TAs. Feedback from users helps to refine these products and inform development. Topic selection criteria for consideration include:

- identification as a fast-moving clinical area in terms of innovative technologies
- multiple NICE recommendations at the same decision point, spread across different sources (for example multiple guidelines and technology appraisals)
- a high-priority area for decision-making and aligns with national and organisational priorities
- stakeholder feedback, for example, guideline consultation comments
- changes in context that could make our recommendations out of date
- ensuring development of the product will not duplicate existing content, duplicate resource or be a barrier to delivery of organisational objectives.

6 Development

For each treatment options summary, a project manager from the medicines optimisation team facilitates development.

6.1 Scoping

The development team is responsible for writing the scope that outlines the aim of each specific treatment options summary. The scope is peer reviewed by clinical experts involved in development of the visual summary of treatment options. Scoping also includes the development of a user testing plan, to support the development of the product and as part of the review and update process.

To avoid unnecessary costs and to ensure these products can be rapidly updated as new innovations become available and are evaluated, additional health economic modelling is not carried out as part of the development.

6.2 Producing the visual product

A medicines adviser identifies NICE recommended treatment options at different decision points in the patient journey. They work with the publishing team to explore different visual design ideas and a draft visual product is produced.

The experts are asked specific questions about current clinical practice. For more complex products, such as the lung cancer example, experts may help with placement of different technologies in the patient journey. The experts review the draft summaries of treatment options. The publishing team produce the final visual products suitable for publication, ensuring they met legal accessibility requirements.

6.3 Quality assurance

Treatment option summaries are quality-assured by the medicines optimisation team who perform a detailed accuracy check.

The products are signed off by a medicines optimisation associate director. Any

associated changes relating to existing NICE guidance recommendations are agreed and signed off by the responsible associate director. The near-final version is agreed by the experts involved, and the products approved for publication by NICE's guidance executive.

6.4 Publication

Each treatment options summary publishes on the tools and resources tab of the relevant NICE guidance web page and is included on the guidance overview page.

7 Review and update

Data analytics and user feedback is used to review the performance of published treatment option summaries. This information is used to inform any future development of these products. We aim to review and rapidly update existing products when relevant new NICE guidelines or technology appraisals are published, to support our living content ambition.

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