

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND
CARE EXCELLENCE**

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE DIRECTORATE

QUALITY STANDARDS

Quality standard topic: Preterm labour and birth

Output: Equality analysis form – Meeting 2

Introduction

As outlined in the [Quality Standards process guide](http://www.nice.org.uk) (available from www.nice.org.uk), NICE has a duty to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between people from different groups. The purpose of this form is to document the consideration of equality issues in each stage of the development process before reaching the final output that will be approved by the NICE Guidance Executive. This equality analysis is designed to support compliance with NICE's obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998.

Table 1 lists the equality characteristics and other equality factors NICE needs to consider, i.e. not just population groups sharing the 'protected characteristics' defined in the Equality Act but also those affected by health inequalities associated with socioeconomic factors or other forms of disadvantage. The table does not attempt to provide further interpretation of the protected characteristics. This is because it is likely to be simpler, and more efficient, to use the evidence underpinning the quality standard to define population groups within the broad protected characteristic categories rather than to start with possibly unsuitable checklists created for other purposes, such as social surveys or HR monitoring tools.

The form should be used to:

- confirm that equality issues have been considered and identify any relevant to the topic
- ensure that the quality standards outputs do not discriminate against any of the equality groups
- highlight planned action relevant to equality
- highlight areas where quality standards may advance equality of opportunity.

This form is completed by the NICE quality standards internal team at each stage within the development process:

- Topic overview (to elicit additional comments as part of active stakeholder engagement)
- Quality Standards Advisory Committee – meeting 1
- Quality Standards Advisory Committee – meeting 2

Table 1

Protected characteristics
Age
Disability
Gender reassignment
Pregnancy and maternity
Race
Religion or belief
Sex
Sexual orientation
Other characteristics
Socio-economic status Depending on policy or other context, this may cover factors such as social exclusion and deprivation associated with geographical areas or inequalities or variations associated with other geographical distinctions (e.g. the North/South divide, urban versus rural).
Marital status (including civil partnership)

Other categories

Other groups in the population experience poor health because of circumstances often affected by, but going beyond, sharing a protected characteristic or socioeconomic status. Whether such groups are identifiable depends on the guidance topic and the evidence. The following are examples of groups covered in NICE guidance:

- Refugees and asylum seekers
- Migrant workers
- Looked after children
- Homeless people.

Quality standards equality analysis

Stage: Meeting 2

Topic: Preterm labour and birth

1. Have any equality issues impacting upon equality groups been identified during this stage of the development process?

- Please state briefly any relevant equality issues identified and the plans to tackle them during development.

Statements 1 and 3 specifically state the importance of women and families needing to be given information and support to meet their needs to explain the care that is available and support shared making decisions on this, without causing unnecessary anxiety.

2. Have relevant bodies and stakeholders been consulted, including those with a specific interest in equalities?

- Have comments highlighting potential for discrimination or advancing equality been considered?

Standing members for Quality Standards Advisory Committees (QSACs) have been recruited by open advert with relevant bodies and stakeholders given the opportunity to apply. In addition to these standing committee members, specialist committee members including a midwife, consultant obstetricians, gynaecologist and lay member have been recruited. The draft quality standard has been published and stakeholder comments received, including from those with a specific interest in equalities. These comments were then considered at the QSAC meeting attended by standing committee and specialist committee members.

All stakeholder comments were reviewed by the NICE team and included in the consultation summary paper which was sent to the committee prior to the post-consultation meeting. This is available on the NICE website.

3. Have any population groups, treatments or settings been excluded from coverage by the quality standard at this stage in the process? Are these exclusions legal and justified?

- Are the reasons for justifying any exclusion legitimate?

This quality standard will cover care for women who are considered to be at risk of preterm labour and birth including diagnosing preterm labour. Women with a multiple pregnancy are not covered in the quality standard as it is covered by a separate clinical guideline and quality standard referral.

4. If applicable, do any of the quality statements make it impossible or unreasonably difficult in practice for a specific group to access a service or element of a service?

- Does access to a service or element of a service depend on membership of a specific group?
- Does a service or element of the service discriminate unlawfully against a group?
- Do people with disabilities find it impossible or unreasonably difficult to receive a service or element of a service?

The statements do not prevent any specific groups from accessing services.

The QSAC recognises that the statements 2, 4 and 5 include reference to specific weeks of pregnancy to promote effective care for these specific populations.

5. If applicable, does the quality standard advance equality?

- Please state if the quality standard, including statements, measures and indicators, as described will advance equality of opportunity, for example by making access more likely for certain groups, by tailoring the service to certain groups, or by making reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities?

A positive impact is expected. We believe these statements promote equality.

For statements 1 and 3 oral and written information should be accessible to women at increased risk of preterm labour or having a planned preterm birth with additional needs such as physical, sensory or learning disabilities, and to women who do not speak or read English. Women receiving information should have access to an interpreter or advocate if needed.

Women should also be provided with information that reflects their religious, ethnic or cultural needs.