

Drug use disorders in adults

Information for the public

Published: 1 November 2012

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NICE quality standard for drug use disorders

The NICE quality standard for drug use disorders sets out what high-quality care in the NHS in England should include, so that the best care can be offered to people with drug use disorders using NHS services in England.

The quality standard for drug use disorders is made up of 10 statements that describe high-quality care for patients. These statements are about the best care you should receive and are summarised below.

1. People who inject drugs have access to needle and syringe programmes that:
 - are nearby
 - have suitable opening hours, and
 - provide injecting equipment and advice on reducing the risk of harm.
2. People in drug treatment are offered a full assessment of their drug use and of what they need to help them recover.
3. Families and carers of people with drug use disorders are offered an assessment of the information and support they need.
4. People who use drug treatment services are offered tests and, if needed, referral for treatment for hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV, and vaccination for hepatitis B.

5. People in drug treatment are given information and advice about the following treatment options:

- those that help them to reduce the risks they may be taking in using illegal drugs (this is called harm reduction)
- taking an opioid substitute (such as methadone or buprenorphine) if they are dependent on heroin (this is called maintenance treatment)
- those that use prescribed medication to help them safely and effectively reduce and then stop taking opioids (this is called detoxification)
- those that help them to stop taking drugs altogether (this is called abstinence-based treatment).

6. People in drug treatment are offered psychosocial support by their keyworker (for example a doctor, nurse or voluntary sector drugs worker they are in regular contact with). This support may involve 'talking therapies', or other activities that help people identify factors influencing their drug use.

7. People in drug treatment are offered support to help them recover and fit back into the community. This includes getting help from housing, education, employment, personal finance and healthcare services and mutual aid. Mutual aid services are ones in which people with similar disorders provide support for each other, for example 12-step programmes such as Narcotics Anonymous, Alcoholics Anonymous and Cocaine Anonymous.

8. People in drug treatment are offered psychosocial or psychological treatments that are suitable for their needs. This may include:

- behavioural therapy in which the person agrees with their therapist a set of consequences and rewards for using and not using drugs (known as contingency management)
- couples therapy
- psychological treatments such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT).

9. People who have stopped taking drugs are offered continued treatment and support for at least 6 months.

10. People in drug treatment are given information and advice on whether they could be offered residential treatment. This depends on factors such as:

- whether they have other medical or social problems
- if they have completed a detoxification programme, and
- if psychosocial treatment has not been successful.

You can read more details of the NICE advice for people who have drug use disorders in 'Treatments for drug misuse' (<http://guidance.nice.org.uk/CG51/PublicInfo>).

Your care

In the NHS, patients and healthcare professionals have rights and responsibilities as set out in the NHS Constitution (www.dh.gov.uk/en/Healthcare/NHSConstitution/index.htm). All NICE quality standards are written to reflect these. You have the right to be involved in discussions and make informed decisions about your treatment and care with your healthcare team. Your choices are important and healthcare professionals should support these wherever possible. You should be treated with dignity and respect.

Information from NICE about drug use disorders

The full quality standard for drug use disorders, written for healthcare professionals, is available from <http://guidance.nice.org.uk/QS23>.

NICE also produces guidance (advice) for the NHS in England and Wales about preventing, diagnosing and treating medical conditions, based on the best available evidence.

NICE has produced guidance on drug use disorders, available from <http://guidance.nice.org.uk/CG51>, <http://guidance.nice.org.uk/CG52> and <http://guidance.nice.org.uk/PH52>. The guidance was used, along with other sources of information, to develop this quality standard.

Information for patients and carers about the care and treatment recommended in the NICE guidance on drug use disorders is available from <http://guidance.nice.org.uk/CG51/publicinfo>. It is written to help patients, their families and carers to understand the care and treatment options that should be available in the NHS.

Changes after publication

9 April 2014: NICE public health guidance 18 has been replaced by NICE public health guideline 52; references and links to public health guidance 18 in this information for the public has been updated to public health guideline 52.

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