

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CLINICAL EXCELLENCE

QUALITY STANDARD SCOPE

1 Quality standard title

Rheumatoid arthritis

2 Quality standards

NICE quality standards are a set of specific, concise statements that act as markers of high-quality, cost-effective patient care, covering the treatment and prevention of different diseases and conditions.

NICE quality standards are derived from the best available evidence, such as NICE guidance and other evidence sources accredited by NHS Evidence. They are developed independently by NICE, in collaboration with the NHS, social care professionals, and their partners and service users, and address clinical and cost effectiveness, patient safety and patient experience.

This work is intended to help the NHS focus on delivering the best possible outcomes for patients.

The quality standard development process is described in detail on the NICE website (see section 5, 'Further information').

3 This standard

This scope defines what the standard will (and will not) examine. It is based on the referral from the Department of Health and has been drafted following the first meeting of the Topic Expert Group.

The areas that will be addressed by the standard are described in the following sections.

3.1 ***Population***

3.1.1 **Groups that will be covered**

- a) Adults (16 years and older) with suspected or diagnosed rheumatoid arthritis.
- b) No patient subgroups have been identified as needing specific consideration.

3.1.2 **Groups that will not be covered**

- a) Children (15 years and younger).
- b) People with other chronic inflammatory polyarthritis.

3.2 ***Healthcare settings***

- a) Primary, secondary and intermediate care and community settings.

3.3 ***Areas of care***

The areas of care of a patient's pathway used to inform the development of the quality statements are set out in section 3.3.1. During the development of the standard the Topic Expert Group will decide which of these areas are suitable for quality statements and measures. The draft quality statements and measures will be the subject of a public consultation. The content of the quality standard statements may change during the process and may differ after consultation with stakeholders.

3.3.1 **Areas of care that will be considered**

- a) Identification and referral for specialist assessment and treatment.
- b) Investigations.
- c) Ongoing access to a multidisciplinary team within an appropriate timeframe.
- d) Education and self-management.
- e) Pharmacological management.

- f) Measuring disease activity.
- g) Ongoing review of function (for example, the impact of disease on work and home life).
- h) Symptom control, pain and fatigue.
- i) Drug monitoring.
- j) Annual review.

3.3.2 Areas of care that will not be considered

- a) Prevention.
- b) Delivery of surgical interventions for rheumatoid arthritis.

3.4 Economic aspects

The Topic Expert Group will take into account both clinical and cost effectiveness when prioritising the quality statements to be included in the quality standard. The economic evidence will be considered, and the cost and commissioning impact of implementing the quality standard will be assessed.

3.5 Timing

The development of the quality standard will begin in November 2012.

4 Key development sources

Relevant NICE guidance (published and in development) will be used to develop the quality standard. If available, other NHS Evidence accredited sources will also be used.

4.1 Published sources

- [Rheumatoid arthritis](#). NICE clinical guideline 79 (2009).

4.2 NICE guidance under development

- None.

4.3 Related NICE quality standards

4.3.1 Published standards

- [Patient experience in adult NHS services](#). NICE quality standard (2012).

4.4 Key policy documents and national audits

Relevant national audits and policy documents will be used to inform the development of the quality standard.

- National Audit Office (2009) [Services for people with rheumatoid arthritis](#)
- Patient View (for NAO) (2009) [Patient groups on rheumatoid arthritis and the NHS: a national survey of patient organisations and other health campaigners](#)
- Medix (for NAO) (2009) [Survey of general practitioners about the diagnosis and management of rheumatoid arthritis](#)
- Department of Health (2006) [The musculoskeletal services framework](#)
- Department of Health (2005) [National service framework for long term conditions](#)

5 Further information

Information on the quality standard development process is provided in [Developing NICE quality standards: interim process guide](#) available from the [NICE website](#).

Information on the [progress of the quality standard](#) is also available from the [NICE website](#).