

# NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CARE EXCELLENCE

## Safe Staffing Guidelines

### Safe staffing for nursing in adult inpatient wards in acute hospitals

#### Equality impact assessment

The impact on equality has been assessed during guidance development according to the principles of the NICE equality policy.

#### Scoping

1. Have any potential equality issues been identified during the scoping process (development of the scope or discussion at the Committee meeting), and, if so, what are they?

**Equality issues were considered throughout the scoping development.**

**Ethnicity, age, disability, sexuality, socio-economic status, religious beliefs, non-English speakers and being a member of a social minority (e.g. migrants, asylum seekers and travellers) may all influence rates of access to health care services.**

**Some medical conditions that may be associated with admission to acute adult wards may vary in prevalence across these groups, affecting the likelihood that members of these protected groups may be present on an acute adult ward.**

**These factors may also influence the level of medical and social dependency on the nurse staffing; for example patients with dementia would be considered to have a disability and would require significantly higher levels of nursing care.**

2. What is the preliminary view as to what extent these potential equality issues need addressing by the Committee? If there are exclusions listed in the scope (for example, treatments or settings), are these justified?

**The impact of medical and social dependency on safe staffing levels is an integral part of the scoping document and formed part of the evidence reviewed by the committee.**

**There are no exclusions within the scope that require justification.**

3. Has any change to the scope (such as additional issues raised during the Committee meeting) been agreed to highlight potential equality issues?

**The importance of patient dependency on safe nursing requirements was raised during the scope development. Patient dependency was therefore included as a review question to allow the committee to fully consider the impact of these factors on safe nursing staff requirements.**

## Consultation

1. Have the potential equality issues identified during the scoping process been addressed by the Committee, and, if so, how?

**Evidence was presented to the committee on the impact of patient dependency on nursing staff requirements. The committee recommended that dependency on nurse care, for example additional care required by those with concurrent mental or physical disabilities, is among a number of patient factors to be considered when setting the nursing staff establishment.**

2. Have any other potential equality issues been raised during the consultation, and, if so, how has the Committee addressed these?

**More vulnerable patients, with no or limited communication ability or sensory difficulties, may be unable to provide feedback on the nursing care they received, recommended by the draft guideline as a method for monitoring the safety and quality of care provided.**

**The recommendation was strengthened to expressly include feedback from carers and specifying that each trust should ensure a system is in place to collect patient, relative and carer feedback.**

**No other potential equality issues were raised during the consultation.**

3. Have any other potential equality issues been identified by the Committee, and, if so, how has the Committee addressed these?

**No other potential equality issues were identified by the committee.**

4. Do the preliminary recommendations make it more difficult in practice for a specific group to access the benefits of care compared with other groups? If so, what are the barriers to, or difficulties with, access to these benefits for the specific group?

**No, the recommendations are worded and formulated to promote equalities. The recommendations cover the care needs of all inpatients irrespective of gender, ethnicity, age, disability, religion or beliefs, sexual orientation and gender identity or socio-economic status.**

5. Is there potential for the preliminary recommendations to have an adverse impact on people with disabilities because of something that is a consequence of the disability?

**No potential adverse impacts were identified**

6. Are there any recommendations or explanations that the Committee could make to remove or alleviate barriers to, or difficulties with, access to the benefits of care identified in questions 4 or 5, or otherwise fulfil NICE's obligation to advance equality?

**By recommending that dependency and other patient factors should be considered on an individual patient basis, the guideline explicitly promotes staffing that provides equality of care.**

7. Have the Committee's considerations of equality issues been described in the consultation document, and, if so, where?

**No. It was not identified that any particular subgroup covered by the Equality Act 2010 would be excluded or negatively affected by the guideline.**

### **Final guidance**

1. Have any additional potential equality issues been raised during the consultation, and, if so, how has the Committee addressed these?

**No further issues were identified**

2. If the recommendations have changed after consultation, are there any recommendations that make it more difficult in practice for a specific group to access the benefits of care compared with other groups? If so, what are the barriers to, or difficulties with, access to these benefits for the specific group?

**No specific barriers were identified**

3. If the recommendations have changed after consultation, is there potential for the preliminary recommendations to have an adverse impact on people with disabilities because of something that is a consequence of the disability?

**No potential adverse impacts were anticipated**

4. If the recommendations have changed after consultation, are there any recommendations or explanations that the Committee could make to remove or alleviate barriers to, or difficulties with, access to the benefits of care identified in questions 2 and 3, or otherwise fulfil NICE's obligations to advance equality?

**No specific barriers were identified**

5. Have the Committee's considerations of equality issues been described in the final document, and, if so, where?

**No. It was not identified that any particular subgroup covered by the Equality Act 2010 would be excluded or negatively affected by the guideline.**

**Approved by Associate Director: Lorraine Taylor**

**Date: 11<sup>th</sup> July 2014**