Process guide for adoption support resources for health technologies

Process and methods
Published: 12 January 2015
nice.org.uk/process/pmg23
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1  Introduction

1.1  Overview of NICE

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), established under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, is the executive non-departmental public body responsible for providing guidance and advice to support health and social care commissioners, providers and others to make sure that care and preventative services are the best quality possible and offer the best value for money. NICE has a statutory role that encompasses the development of quality standards, advice, information and recommendations about NHS, public health and social care services. NICE provides independent, evidence-based guidance on the most effective ways to prevent, diagnose and treat disease and ill health and reduce health inequalities and variations. NICE guidance on public health topics makes recommendations for populations and individuals on activities, policies and strategies that can help prevent disease or improve health.

NICE guidance on health technologies includes the use of new and existing medicines, treatments and procedures in the NHS; this includes medicines and use of medical devices and diagnostics. Putting NICE guidance into practice can be challenging, and this is why NICE provides support.

1.2  Purpose of this process manual

This process manual describes the role of the medicines and technologies adoption team in supporting the adoption of NICE-recommended health technologies.

NICE process manuals are produced to ensure that NICE programmes of work are carried out in an open, credible, transparent and timely way, allowing input from internal and external stakeholders.

This process manual is written to:

- help members of the adoption team perform their role and work effectively with other NICE teams
- help other NICE teams and external stakeholders understand the role of the adoption team in supporting the adoption of health technologies recommended by NICE.

It does this by:

- defining how the adoption team works alongside NICE programmes that produce guidance
1.3 **Overview of the adoption team**

The adoption team provides a systematic approach to the adoption of new health technologies (devices, diagnostics and medicines) that have had positive recommendations from NICE.

Putting new health technologies into practice can be challenging for a number of reasons (often called barriers to adoption). These include:

- Significant changes to current processes or procedures.
- The time available to make changes to ways of working.
- The time available for training.
- Cost and budgetary priorities.
- A lack of leadership for innovation.
- Understanding the need for making changes.
- Being able to implement changes.
- User acceptance (this may include both patients and healthcare professionals).

The adoption team identifies NICE guidance which has significant barriers to adoption and develops resources to support their implementation. These resources may cover any NICE guidance topic except for highly specialist technologies and cancer drug guidance.

The overall aims of the team are to:
• promote innovation and growth in the health technologies industry by supporting adoption of selected health technologies recommended by NICE

• provide focused practical advice and support to encourage the implementation of guidance

• work with the NICE impact team to measure the impact of NICE guidance

• support those who commission and provide health and social care to improve the efficiency and the effectiveness of services using health technologies

• support the provision of high-quality, evidence-based, cost-effective care for patients.

1.4 Overview of adoption support resources

The adoption team produces adoption support resources (sometimes referred to as 'insights') for selected health technologies. To do this the team works closely with health and social care organisations that are commissioning, providing, implementing or using a technology (or group of technologies) that NICE has recommended.

The aims of the adoption support resources are to:

• provide real-life examples of how services have implemented a new health technology

• identify key national priorities that support the adoption of the technology

• help health and social care organisations anticipate challenges and potential barriers when considering the adoption of a new health technology

• help local health and social care organisations to identify solutions based on experiences of other services

• provide tools and documents than can help services plan for and better implement new health technologies

• help providers and commissioners to review current service provision and make a business case for change.

See section 2 for more information on the adoption support resources.

The adoption team also makes sure that adoption support for guidance is consistent with NICE's efforts to promote equality and eliminate discrimination.
1.5  Key audiences

Adoption support resources published by NICE are of interest and relevance to a range of external stakeholders:

Organisations

- Health and social care providers, including NHS formulary committees.
- Regional medicines optimisation committees.
- Commissioners including clinical commissioning groups (CCGs), NHS England, the Department of Health, local authorities and Public Health England.
- Academic health science networks.
- Pharmaceutical companies.
- Medical technology companies.
- Patient organisations and groups.

Individuals

- Health and social care practitioners responsible for putting new health technologies into practice.
- Commissioning staff including clinical leads and chairs in CCGs and clinical and commissioning networks.
- Staff with a responsibility for quality improvement.
- Business managers, finance and procurement staff.
- Patients and the general public.

See appendix B for more information on who is involved in the work of the adoption team.
2 Adoption support resources: overview

The published outputs of the adoption team are adoption support resources, or 'insights'. These web-based resources support the implementation of NICE guidance or recommendations on health technologies, particularly those produced by the Centre for Health Technology Evaluation. On occasion these may also be developed to support implementation of technologies recommended in NICE guidance.

Adoption support resources are developed in 2 ways:

- With case studies: when the technology, or group of technologies, is already being routinely used in a number of health or social care organisations, the team develops a resource by collecting and recording experiences and learning from sites in the UK that are already using the technology. These may be presented as case studies in the final resource or as linked shared learning examples. These resources take about 6 months to produce (see section 4).

- Without case studies: when the technology, or group of technologies, is not already being routinely used in UK health and social care services, the team collects insights from expert practitioners on the considerations that would be important for successful adoption. These resources take about 5 months to produce.

Where NICE guidance has been identified as having specific and significant adoption issues, such as a change in the care pathway, resource impact, staff training or service reconfiguration, the adoption team may instead do feasibility or prospective adoption projects. The guidance topics are identified internally and the project will be developed as needed on a bespoke basis. Because these are developed on a case-by-case basis, the process will vary and so is not included in this manual.

2.1 Format of NICE adoption support resources

These are web-based resources that can be downloaded as a PDF or ebook, or in ePUB format.

Each resource focuses on a particular health technology, or group of technologies, and provides practical information on what aspects to plan and consider during implementation.

For each topic, the adoption support resource will:

- provide real-life examples of where the technology has been used and the impact that this had on patient care
• identify potential barriers to adoption and solutions

• identify how patient and system benefits, including safety and cost savings, can be achieved in practice

• help organisations to prepare a business case for change.

Key sections include:

• Current practice.

• Case studies from health and social care services, or links to shared learning examples developed during the course of the project.

• Practical advice for adopting the technology including staff training, business case development, project management and how to overcome implementation challenges.

• Links to real-life example documents such as business cases, training tools, audit tools, decision-making tools and NICE savings and productivity and local practice collections.

The resources are not intended to replace guidance and recommendations, but to focus on factors supporting the successful adoption of a new health technology. They will refer the user to the guidance for further information where necessary.

The adoption support resources are accessed through the NICE website alongside the source guidance, or through the adoption team webpage.
3  Adoption support resources: topic selection

3.1  Topic research

Adoption support resources support the implementation of health technologies that NICE has recommended.

For each selected guidance topic, a health technology adoption manager researches the topic in detail. This gives a better understanding of current practice and issues relating to the adoption of a new technology. Information is gathered from a variety of sources, including:

- guidance notification, scope and draft guidance
- published NICE guidance and implementation support covering relevant areas of practice
- local and national health and social care policies, strategies, legislation and regulation
- epidemiological data on prevalence and incidence
- the adoption and impact reference panel (see appendix B)
- users of the technology advised by the notifying company.

The health technology adoption manager should understand existing care pathways and services before the technology selection meeting. They should also know about service models that may exist across the different settings and how the service may be funded or commissioned.

3.2  Topic selection meeting

Adoption support resources are developed for technologies that present the most significant changes to current practice or have the most financial impact. The adoption team selects which technologies will need adoption support after the final guidance scope has been published by NICE. This is carried out at a topic selection meeting attended by adoption team staff. The technical analyst from the relevant programme is also invited to attend and, where appropriate for medicines, an advisor from the medicines and prescribing team.

The purpose of the topic selection meeting is to discuss, agree and document factors considered in sections 3.2.1, 3.2.2 and 3.2.3.
3.2.1 The need for an adoption support resource

The adoption team considers a range of criteria to identify the need to produce an adoption support resource.

A topic selection tool is used to inform discussions and to document the decision. This enables individual technologies, or groups of technologies used for a named clinical condition, to be prioritised based on a set of questions about the complexity of adoption and its potential impact.

The following criteria are considered for selection:

- The need for substantial care pathway redesign.
- Changes in commissioning arrangements (including budget transfers to fund the technology and decommissioning services).
- Potential financial savings.
- Complexity of funding arrangements.
- Significant barriers to adoption that need to be overcome in order to allow wide-scale adoption, for example retraining large sections of the workforce, decommissioning services and physical changes to clinical areas.

These considerations help to identify what the likely impact of adoption will be and whether an adoption support resource is needed. Technologies are likely to be selected if implementation would lead to significant changes to existing health and social care services.

3.2.2 The type of adoption support resource

If the technology, or group of technologies, is already in use in heath or social care services, an adoption support resource with case studies is developed. A number of factors will be taken into account when deciding if this approach is appropriate, including:

- The number of health or social care organisations already using the technology.
- How long the organisations have been using the technology for.
- Whether the technology has been adopted in a sustainable way and in line with NICE guidance.
• The scale of adoption within these organisations, for example the number of devices being used, the target patient population and actual patient population using the technology.

• Whether these organisations can provide useful experience and advice on putting the technology into practice.

Where the technology, or group of technologies, is not already being routinely used in UK health and social care services, the team works with expert practitioners to identify the considerations that would be important for successful adoption and instead produce an adoption support resource without case studies.

3.2.3 When to publish the adoption support resource

Adoption support resources for the medical technologies evaluation programme (MTEP) and diagnostics assessment programme (DAP) are published either at the same time as the guidance or after it. This depends on the complexity of adopting the technology and on any changes to draft guidance recommendations.

All adoption support resources for technology appraisals are published after the guidance.

At times the adoption team may need to prioritise the publication of topics according to the team’s capacity, and this will inform the decision about whether the resource publishes at the same time or after guidance.

3.2.4 Support for shared learning development

If, during guidance scoping, the adoption team has identified health or social care organisations using the technology but an adoption support resource is not going to be produced, the health technology adoption manager will encourage and help practitioners to submit their example to the NICE local practice collection database.

3.3 Communicating the outcome of topic selection

The adoption team informs the relevant guidance team of the outcome of topic selection and the sponsor is informed by the guidance team.

3.4 Reviewing the topic selection decision

The topic selection decision is reviewed and reconsidered in the following circumstances:
• If there is a change in the draft guidance as a result of consultation.

• If there is any new information provided at guidance committee meetings that identifies significant cost considerations or adoption issues that had not been previously identified.
4 Adoption support resources (insights) with case studies

This section describes how the adoption team develops adoption support resources with case studies when the technology, or group of technologies, is already in routine use in health or social care services.

4.1 Key stages in development

Table 1 shows the key stages in the development process for an adoption support resource with case studies.

Table 1 Key stages of the development process for a resource with case studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Weeks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topic selection meeting identifies need for adoption support resource</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic allocation to a health technology adoption manager</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet companies</td>
<td>2–3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree scope of resource, in line with guidance scope</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invitation letters sent to organisations currently using the technology</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site visits carried out by health technology adoption manager</td>
<td>6–12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document experiences and learning from sites</td>
<td>6–12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop the adoption support resource using information from guidance and participating organisations</td>
<td>6–13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality assurance, including review by company, participating sites, guidance team, editorial team and publication executive</td>
<td>12–22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NICE publication executive approves resource for publication</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NICE publishes adoption support resource</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2 Working with companies

Once the adoption team has selected a topic, the relevant companies are contacted and met by the team to discuss the use of the technology. The adoption team also asks companies if possible to provide details of UK organisations that have purchased or used the technology.
After the meeting, companies may be contacted for further information for inclusion in the adoption support resource.

Companies are not involved in the meetings that the adoption team holds with health and social care organisations. This is because:

- it is important that NICE is seen to be independent
- participating organisations or experts need to be able to provide the adoption team with a clear account of how they have put the technology into practice and any challenges they experienced in doing this
- it prevents NICE from influencing the relationship between the company and customers/users.

NICE is aware of the importance of commercial sensitivity and the potential to inadvertently influence procurement decisions.

Once the adoption support resource has been drafted companies are asked to review the section on the technology for accuracy (see section 6 on quality assurance).

4.3 Recruiting organisations

The adoption team contacts the relevant directors of organisations using the technology to invite them to contribute to the development of the adoption support resource. If they agree, the adoption team contacts the lead clinicians and managers responsible for the technology in each organisation. A health technology adoption manager speaks to users of the technology to understand how it is used before arranging a site visit.

4.4 Visits to participating organisations and collection of information

A health technology adoption manager visits health and social care practitioners and managers who have agreed to be involved in the development of the adoption support resource. These meetings provide an opportunity for an in-depth account of each organisation's experiences of putting the technology into routine use.
5 Adoption support resources (insights) without case studies

This section describes how the adoption team develops adoption support resources without case studies when the technology, or group of technologies, is not in routine use in health or social care services.

5.1 Key stages in development

Table 2 shows the key stages in the development process for an adoption support resource (without case studies).

Table 2 Key stages of the development process for a resource without case studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Weeks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topic selection meeting identifies need for adoption support resource</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic allocation to a health technology adoption manager</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet companies</td>
<td>2–3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree scope of project, in line with guidance scope</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invitation letters sent to individuals identified as experts during guidance development or who may be using the technology in a research capacity or recruited through the adoption and impact reference panel</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual interviews carried out by health technology adoption manager</td>
<td>4–8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document insights and practical advice from experts</td>
<td>4–8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop the adoption support resource using information from guidance and participating experts</td>
<td>6–10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality assurance, including review by company, participating experts, guidance team, editorial team and publication executive</td>
<td>8–18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NICE publication executive approves resource for publication</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NICE publishes adoption support resource</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2 Working with companies

See section 4.2.
5.3  **Recruiting and interviewing experts**

The adoption team contacts any health and social care experts identified by the guidance developers, the company, stakeholders (such as royal colleges or NHS England) or from the adoption and impact reference panel to invite them to contribute to the development of the resource.

A health technology adoption manager interviews health and social care experts who agree to contribute to gather their views on adoption levers and challenges for the selected technology (or group of technologies).
6 Producing and quality-assuring adoption support resources

6.1 Producing the adoption support resource

The health technology adoption manager produces the first draft of the adoption support resource using information gathered from companies and from participating health and social care organisations or identified experts during topic research. This information is recorded using agreed templates and is developed during the course of the project. The templates provide the basic format and structure for adoption support resources. These have been developed so that a consistent format can be presented online. The templates are produced by the adoption team with the support of the publishing team.

6.2 Quality assurance

All adoption support resources are subject to a quality assurance process before they can be published on the NICE website.

6.2.1 Review by companies and contributors

The companies, lead members of staff from participating organisations and contributing experts are consulted on relevant sections of the first draft (this includes the communications team for NHS organisations where case studies are included).

Case study sections need to be signed-off by person nominated by the participating organisation before the document is shared more widely.

6.2.2 Internal and external review

The draft is reviewed by other members of the adoption team and the senior health technology adoption manager. It is then emailed for internal and external review to:

- staff working in the guidance programme, the resource impact team and medicines and prescribing team at NICE
- a selected member or members of the adoption and impact reference panel
- a specialist advisor and/or member of the guidance committee
- contributing health and social care professionals.
This is not a public consultation and the comments are not published on the NICE website.

6.2.3 Editing

Before NICE adoption support resources are published they are edited by the NICE publishing team to ensure the content is:

- consistent with NICE guidance and NICE quality standards
- consistent with NICE style
- clear, consistent, unambiguous, grammatically correct and with correct spelling and punctuation.

6.2.4 Programme director sign-off

The programme director signs off the draft resource before it is submitted to the publication executive. This includes reviewing the content of the resource and the comments table from internal/external review.

6.2.5 Publication executive

The NICE publication executive panel considers and signs off the final draft of the NICE adoption support resource for publication.

6.3 Publishing

Once the adoption support resource has been signed-off by the NICE publication executive panel, the publishing team loads the landing page and resource onto the NICE website. A further quality and consistency check is done by the adoption team.
7  **Post-publication support and review**

This section addresses the work of the adoption team after NICE guidance or the adoption support resources are published.

### 7.1  *Post-publication meetings*

Members of the guidance team and the adoption team offer to meet the lead companies of a technology recommended by MTEP or DAP at 4 weeks after publication. This meeting is organised by the adoption team and includes:

- a discussion of the processes followed
- any issues or concerns from the company's point of view
- methods to promote implementation of the guidance
- an update on communications and publicity to date.

### 7.2  *Post-publication communications and publicity*

After publication, the adoption team carries out activities to encourage the use of NICE resources to improve the adoption of new health technologies. These vary according to topic and may include:

- speaking at relevant national conferences or events
- working with the NICE field team to support engagement with networks or other activities
- encouraging people to submit examples of shared learning.

### 7.3  *Updating the resources and correcting errors*

Adoption support resources should not need regular updates. However, updates should be considered if:

- the relevant NICE guidance is updated
- the relevant NICE guidance is amended
- there is a significant error or omission that needs to be corrected.
Quality assurance of minor updates to the adoption support resources will be done by the adoption team and signed-off by the programme director.

NICE adoption support resources will be removed from the website if:

- the relevant NICE guidance is withdrawn
- the technology is no longer available in the UK
- the technology has been updated such that the adoption support resource is out of date.
## Appendix A: Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adoption</strong></td>
<td>The decision to use or deliver a particular therapeutic product or intervention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adoption support resources</strong></td>
<td>Web-based resources that support the implementation of NICE guidance or recommendations for health technologies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Barriers and levers to adoption** | Factors that can affect how therapeutic products or interventions are introduced, including:  
  - Significant changes to current processes or procedures.  
  - The time available to make changes to ways of working.  
  - The time available for training.  
  - Cost and budgetary priorities.  
  - Management leadership for innovation.  
  - Understanding the need and benefit for making changes.  
  - Being able to implement changes.  
  - User acceptance (this may include both patients and healthcare professionals). |
<p>| <strong>Care pathway</strong> | This refers to the sequence of practices, procedures and treatments that should be used by health and social care professionals when a person has a particular condition. The aim is to improve the quality of care. |
| <strong>Cost effectiveness</strong> | Value for money. A test or treatment is said to be 'cost effective' if it leads to better health than using resources in other ways. |
| <strong>Diagnostics</strong> | All types of measurements and tests that are used to evaluate a person's condition, such as physiological measurements, laboratory tests and pathology tests, imaging tests, and endoscopy. |
| <strong>Diagnostics advisory committee</strong> | The diagnostics advisory committee develops recommendations for new and existing diagnostic technologies in the NHS. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Diagnostics guidance</strong></th>
<th>NICE guidance about the adoption and use of a diagnostic technology.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>External review</strong></td>
<td>Quality assurance of the adoption support resources by people who do not work for NICE but who have signed a non-disclosure agreement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **External stakeholder** | An organisation with an interest in a topic on which NICE is developing diagnostics guidance. Stakeholders may be:  
  - Manufacturers, developers, distributors or agents of technologies.  
  - National patient and carer organisations.  
  - NHS organisations.  
  - National organisations representing healthcare professionals. |
| **Health technologies**  | Any drug, device or intervention used to promote health, prevent and treat disease, and improve rehabilitation and long-term care. |
| **Internal review**      | Quality assurance of the adoption support resources by staff employed by NICE. |
| **Implementation**       | The process of putting guidance into practice. |
| **Local practice collection** | The NICE local practice collection brings together case studies from projects happening around the country. |
| **Medical devices**      | All products, except medicines, used in healthcare for the diagnosis, prevention, monitoring or treatment of illness or disability. |
| **Medical technology**   | A medical technology is any instrument, apparatus, appliance, material or other article, whether used alone or in combination, including the software necessary for its application, intended to:  
  - diagnose, prevent, monitor, treat or alleviate disease  
  - diagnose, monitor, treat, alleviate or compensate for an injury or disability  
  - investigate, replace or modify the anatomy or a physiological process  
  - control conception. |
| **Medical technologies advisory committee** | The medical technologies advisory committee develops recommendations for new and existing medical technologies in the NHS. |
| **Medical technologies evaluation programme** | The NICE medical technologies evaluation programme selects and evaluates new or innovative medical technologies (including devices and diagnostics). |
| **Patient outcomes** | People's health outcomes from following the care pathway. These outcomes usually result from the treatment that follows the use of a diagnostic technology. These outcomes include benefits and harms from either the diagnostic technology or the treatment. |
| **Publication executive** | NICE directors who approve all NICE guidance for publication. |
| **Scope** | Document created at the start of producing a piece of guidance outlining what the guidance will and will not cover. It provides a detailed framework for the evaluation and defines the disease, the patients, the technologies, the outcomes, and the costs that will be covered by the evaluation, as well as the questions the evaluation aims to address. The final version of the scope is used as a starting point for developing the guidance. |
| **Technology appraisals guidance** | Technology appraisal guidance is sets of recommendations on the use of new and existing medicines in the NHS. |
| **Health technology adoption manager** | A member of the adoption team who is responsible for project managing and developing the adoption support resources. |
Appendix B: Who is involved in the work of the adoption team?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>External stakeholders</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The adoption and impact reference panel</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Academic health science networks (AHSNs)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health and social care organisations</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Manufacturers and distributors of health technologies</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NICE teams</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The adoption team meets regularly with the resource impact assessment team to ensure information from adoption sites on the cost impact of technologies can inform the development and quality assurance of resource impact assessment products.

The publishing team reviews templates and draft documents that are published by NICE.

The adoption team liaises with the NICE Medicines and Prescribing Associates on a topic-by-topic basis as needed, particularly for technology appraisals.

The adoption team liaises with this team on a topic-by-topic basis as needed.

| Resource impact assessment team | The adoption team meets regularly with the resource impact assessment team to ensure information from adoption sites on the cost impact of technologies can inform the development and quality assurance of resource impact assessment products. |
| Communications | The publishing team reviews templates and draft documents that are published by NICE. |
| Medicines and prescribing | The adoption team liaises with the NICE Medicines and Prescribing Associates on a topic-by-topic basis as needed, particularly for technology appraisals. |
| Patient and public involvement team | The adoption team liaises with this team on a topic-by-topic basis as needed. |
About this manual

This process manual describes the processes involved in developing adoption support resources.

Nothing in this manual shall restrict any disclosure of information by NICE that is required by law (including in particular but without limitation the Freedom of Information Act 2000).

Produced by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (June 2017)

Changes after publication

June 2017: The process manual was updated to reflect a more flexible and responsive approach to the requirements for support for individual technologies (or groups of technologies) to ensure they meet the needs of the target audience(s). The practical support required to improve local capability and opportunity to support uptake of new medicines and technologies as outlined in the NICE implementation strategy may take a variety of forms including Insights from the NHS resources, algorithms, shared learning opportunities, or other bespoke offerings.

April 2015: Minor maintenance.