

Process manual for the endorsement of guidance and quality standard support resources

Process and methods

Published: 20 May 2016

[nice.org.uk/process/pmg29](https://www.nice.org.uk/process/pmg29)

Contents

Overview of NICE	4
1 The NICE Endorsement Programme	5
1.1 What is endorsement?	5
1.2 Benefits of endorsement	6
1.3 Key principles and activities of the NICE Endorsement Programme	7
1.4 Term of endorsement.....	7
2 Process for endorsement	8
Figure 1 Process for endorsement.....	8
2.1 Identification of support resources	9
2.2 Initial engagement with resource producers	9
2.3 Eligibility.....	9
2.4 Providing the initial submission	10
2.5 Prioritisation.....	11
2.6 Fees for endorsement.....	11
2.7 Resource assessment criteria.....	11
2.8 Producing the initial assessment.....	12
2.9 Validation.....	13
2.10 Endorsement statement	13
2.11 Reviewing the endorsed resource.....	13
3 Timeline.....	14
4 Equality statement.....	15
5 Who is involved in the process?	16
Table 2 Key participants in the endorsement process.....	16
6 Updating the endorsement process manual.....	18
7 Further information.....	19
8 Feedback and complaints procedure	20
Appendix 1 Endorsement of guidance and quality standards resources: assessment criteria.....	21

NICE endorsement analysis.....	21
About this manual	24

Overview of NICE

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is the independent body responsible for driving improvement and excellence in the health and social care system. We develop guidance, standards and information on high-quality health and social care. We also advise on ways to promote healthy living and prevent ill health.

Formerly the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, our name changed on 1 April 2013 to reflect our new and additional responsibility to develop guidance and set quality standards for social care, as outlined in the Health and Social Care Act (2012).

Our aim is to help practitioners deliver the best possible care and give people the most effective treatments, based on the most up-to-date evidence and which provide value for money, to reduce inequalities and variation.

Our products and resources are produced for the NHS, local authorities, care providers, charities, and anyone who has a responsibility for commissioning or providing healthcare, public health or social care services.

To find out more about what we do, visit our [website](#) and follow us on Twitter: [@NICEComms](#).

1 The NICE Endorsement Programme

1.1 What is endorsement?

The NICE Endorsement Programme formally endorses resources produced by external organisations that support the implementation of NICE guidance and the use of quality standards in part or in full.

NICE issues an endorsement statement for endorsed resources to the producer and displays it on the NICE website. Some examples of endorsed resources are shown in the table below.

Table 1 Examples of resources that have been endorsed

Resource name	Description	Resource producer	Date	Relevant NICE guideline or quality standard
My pregnancy and postnatal wellbeing plan	This wellbeing plan may help health professionals to recognise, support disclosure and to engage with women who may have mental health problems	Collaboration between: The Boots Family Trust, Tommy's, Netmums, the Royal College of Midwives and the Institute of Health Visiting	January 2015	CG192
CareFall eLearning package	CareFall covers the safe and effective management of a patient who falls in hospital	Royal College of Physicians	March 2015	CG161, CG176, QS16
Safer Nursing Care Tool	A spreadsheet which can calculate nurse staffing establishments required for the duty rota	The Shelford Group	October 2014	SG1

Examples of support resources, which are suitable for endorsement, include:

- academic detailing aids

- baseline assessment, benchmarking tools and audit support
- costing tools
- decision support tools for use at the point of care
- implementation and adoption resources
- learning modules/educational packages
- patient decision aids
- patient information produced by an Information Standard (IS) accredited organisation
- nurse staffing/establishment requirement setting toolkits
- support for commissioning.

For an up-to-date list of all endorsed resources, please visit NICE's [endorsement webpage](#).

The NICE Endorsement Programme does not consider mobile applications, because endorsement of these is part of current National Information Board work programmes. The term mobile application is shorthand for digital applications, which may include mobile apps, web-based applications or a digital service.

Other resources that will not be considered for NICE endorsement include those which act as a hub to signpost to many other resources and those produced by organisations which only support their particular product.

1.2 *Benefits of endorsement*

Resource producers who have their resources endorsed will benefit from having the opportunity to have their resource carry a NICE endorsement statement. Their resource will also be signposted to from the relevant NICE guidance and quality standard webpages and listed on the NICE endorsement webpage. Having their resource endorsed may also present an opportunity to work with NICE in developing their resource.

Users of endorsed resources will have the reassurance that using the resource will support implementation of the relevant NICE guidance recommendations and/or quality standard statements.

1.3 *Key principles and activities of the NICE Endorsement Programme*

NICE operates the NICE Endorsement Programme to a set of core principles of transparency, inclusiveness, independence, timeliness and regular review.

The key activities of the NICE Endorsement Programme are to:

- identify resources that support the implementation of NICE guidance and the use of quality standards
- assess applications for endorsement by NICE against set criteria
- regularly review endorsed resources and request updates as necessary
- ensure that the positive reputation of NICE is maintained.

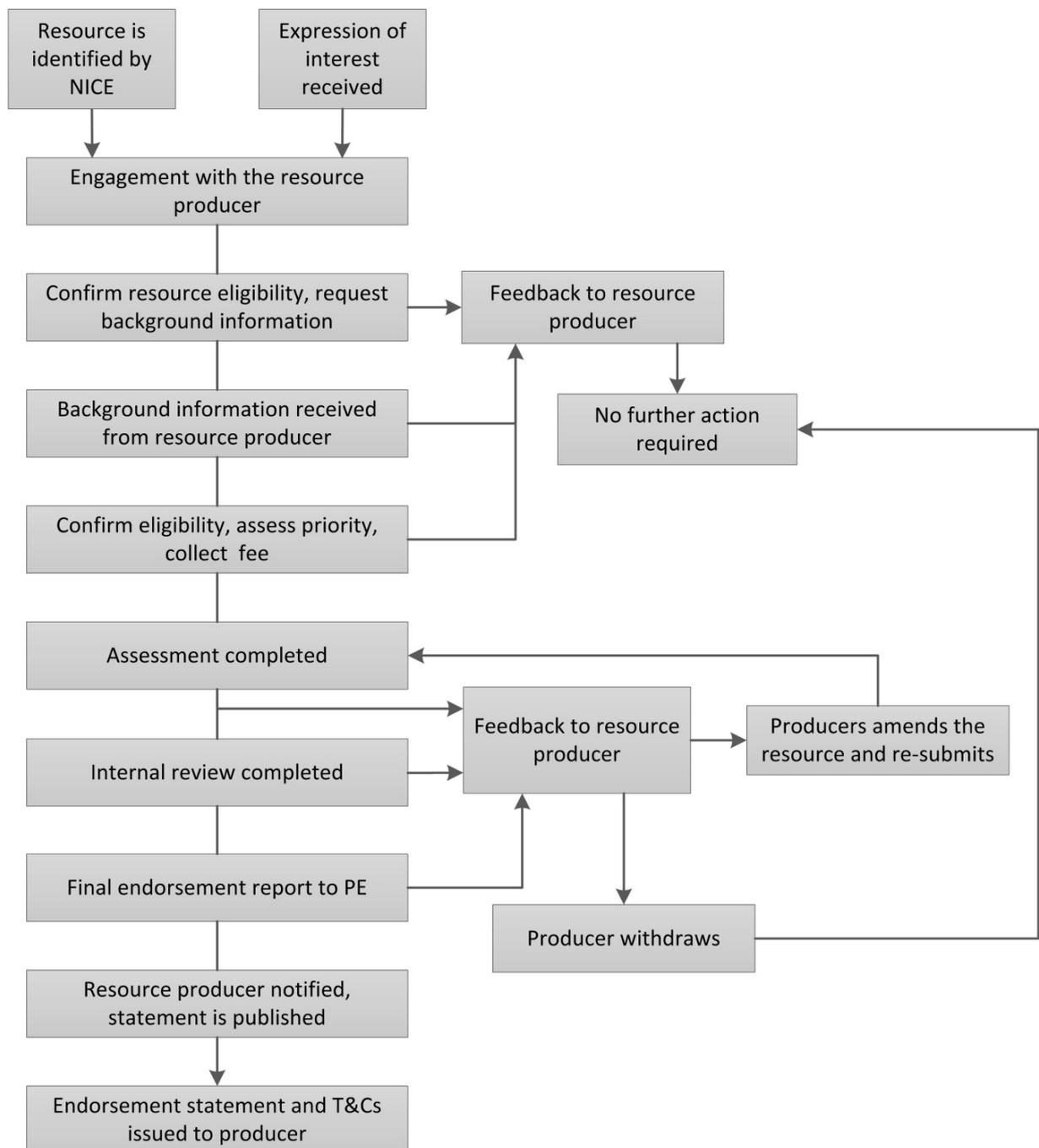
1.4 *Term of endorsement*

Endorsement of a support resource by NICE is linked to the lifetime and review cycle of the relevant guidance recommendations or quality standard statements, unless the lifetime of the resource is shorter, or the producer significantly updates the resource. If the recommendations or statements are changed or updated after the guidance or quality standard is published, the resource will be reviewed. This may result in the resource needing to be updated, continuation of the endorsement, or termination of the endorsement.

2 Process for endorsement

This section outlines the process for identifying, assessing and quality assuring resources for endorsement. The diagram gives an overview of the assessment process.

Figure 1 Process for endorsement



2.1 *Identification of support resources*

Resource producers may present their guidance or quality standards support resource for NICE endorsement in response to:

- a suggestion from NICE as part of identifying implementation needs for specific guidelines and quality standards during the development phase
- an invitation on the endorsement webpage
- an invitation in guidelines or quality standards NICE is currently considering for update, or NICE has identified as having poor uptake
- identification of a resource as one which may act as an enabler to overcome an implementation barrier.

The programme will not consider a resource identified in any other way. It will not consider a generic resource, that is, one covering the general subject of NICE guidance or quality standards without reflecting specific recommendations or statements.

If a resource producer is approached by NICE to apply for endorsement, this does not guarantee that their resource will be endorsed, only that NICE is interested in considering the resource. Only those resources endorsed by NICE will be signposted to on the relevant NICE guidance and quality standards webpages.

2.2 *Initial engagement with resource producers*

When NICE identifies a resource intended to support implementation of NICE guidance or the use of a quality standard that is currently in development or nearing publication, NICE will contact the resource producer to confirm interest in their resource and to check eligibility for assessment.

When a resource producer approaches NICE directly, eligibility will need to be confirmed before an assessment can be carried out; this may mean that an initial submission of the resource will be needed.

2.3 *Eligibility*

For a resource to be eligible for assessment it must:

- help to implement NICE guidance and/or quality standards

- be designed to support recommendations in NICE guidance and/or statements in quality standards
- be designed for and have content applicable to, or which can be applied to, a UK health or social care setting
- be usable as a stand-alone resource (that is, it does not need to be incorporated into another system or combined with something else to function)
- be fully accessible to NICE for assessment.

Eligible applications:

- will fill a gap or add value to existing NICE products, without duplicating them
- will address an uptake issue or need, if relating to older guidance or quality standards
- may cover recommendations or statements that have been identified (for example, during consultation) as having implementation challenges or difficulties
- will not cover any area that already has at least 2 endorsed resources of this type for the guidance recommendations and/or quality standard statements
- will have the majority of the resource relevant to NICE guidance or quality standards
- will not contradict NICE recommendations or quality statements
- will not have been produced by a company to support only their products
- will reflect specifically some recommendations or statements and not be a generic resource covering only the general subject of the NICE guidance or quality standard.

NICE is particularly interested in support resources that address areas that are challenging to implement or have the greatest impact on outcomes.

2.4 *Providing the initial submission*

All resource producers applying for endorsement will be asked to complete an initial data-gathering form, providing background information about their resource.

This will include questions covering:

- the overall objective of the resource, for whom it is intended and how it is to be used
- clear identification of which elements of the resource align to which specific recommendations in NICE guidance or quality standard statements
- an explanation of how a user acquires the resource for use (this will include identification of any fees, licensing implications or software system requirements)
- whether there are plans to update the resource routinely, aside of guidance recommendations changing.

The resource producer should provide a lead contact to liaise with the project manager as the submission progresses through the process, and a sponsor who has knowledge of the submission and can be contacted in the absence of the lead contact. Once accepted, the background information, resource and accompanying documentation is reviewed by an assessor.

2.5 *Prioritisation*

Priority will be given to resources intended to support implementation of NICE guidance and/or use of a quality standard currently in development or close to publication.

NICE may choose not to pursue endorsement assessments for all resources brought to our attention and will focus on those considered to have a high impact on outcomes or meet an implementation challenge.

2.6 *Fees for endorsement*

Any resource producer whose application for endorsement is accepted will be considered in relation to incurring a fee. Up-to-date details about fee charges are available separately from the endorsement project team by emailing endorsement@nice.org.uk.

2.7 *Resource assessment criteria*

The support resources are assessed using a set of questions supplemented by specific checks for consistency with the relevant NICE guidance recommendations or quality standard statements. Safe staffing assessments consider all the factors identified in the guidance recommendations, relevant to a toolkit, whereas other assessments only look at those recommendations or statements identified by the resource producer.

2.8 *Producing the initial assessment*

Once the support resource is accepted for assessment, an assessor will validate and assess the background information and the resource provided by the resource producer against the generic endorsement criteria (see [appendix 1](#)). The specific criteria are generated by the assessor in response to the recommendations or statements identified by the producer. Some recommendations or statements may only be confirmed once the relevant guidance or quality standard is in the final stages of publication or published.

The assessor prepares an assessment that describes how the support resource meets the generic criteria, categorising them as fully met, partially met or not met. NICE will only endorse the elements of the support resource that align with NICE guidance or quality standards and will look carefully when making an assessment for aspects of the resource that may be in conflict with NICE guidance or quality standards.

If 1 criterion is not met, the resource producer will be informed that the resource cannot be endorsed without amendment. This may not apply to resources that support safe staffing guidelines and would be dependent on the relevance and strength of the recommendation in the guideline.

If 2 or more criteria are partially met, the resource producer will be informed that the resource cannot be endorsed without amendment.

NICE also reserves the right to decide not to progress with an assessment if it is taking a large amount of time and the resource covers very few recommendations or statements. This decision would be discussed with the producer.

Once the generic assessment is completed it is quality assured by another member of the team.

An editor assesses whether the resource is consistent with the guidance recommendations or the quality standard statements that the producer has identified. If the assessment suggests that the resource does not align with what NICE has said, the producer will be asked to consider amending the resource. If the resource is amended it would be reassessed, providing that sufficient guidance recommendations or quality standard statements are covered by the resource and it continues to fill a gap to improve implementation.

NICE does not have the specific skills available to judge the quality of the resource submitted. A disclaimer is therefore added to any endorsed resource to indicate that this judgement has not been made.

Final sign off is provided by a relevant Associate Director.

2.9 *Validation*

NICE Publication Executive is an executive committee that acts under delegated authority of the NICE Board to review and approve documents for publication and ensure the endorsement process was followed. It reviews brief details of the resource and the proposed endorsement statement. If NICE Publication Executive raises any concerns, these will need to be resolved before progressing to publication.

2.10 *Endorsement statement*

The endorsement statement is only a reflection of those resources assessed and found to support what NICE has published.

Links to the support resource will be added to the relevant guidance or quality standard webpage and the [endorsement page](#) on the NICE website. The statement will be available on the endorsement webpage. A link to the resource may also be included in a NICE pathway. The endorsement statement is issued to the resource producer who will sign appropriate terms and conditions for use which will also refer to where and how the wording is displayed.

2.11 *Reviewing the endorsed resource*

The project team initiates a review of an endorsed resource when the relevant guidance or quality standard is reviewed and any relevant recommendations or statements are updated. If the resource is changed at any time, this could alter the original assessment. The producer should therefore notify the project team of any changes and the possible impact on the original endorsement decision. Any changes are assessed using the original process.

3 Timeline

The time taken to award an endorsement could be approximately 8 weeks from acceptance of the background information and payment of fees with confirmation of priority to NICE. This may vary depending on the amount of resource producer interaction that is needed and the publication date of the NICE guidance and/or quality standard.

4 Equality statement

NICE is committed to promoting equality, eliminating unlawful discrimination and actively considering the implications of its recommendations for human rights. It aims to comply fully with all legal obligations to:

- promote race and disability equality, and equality of opportunity between men and women, and
- eliminate unlawful discrimination on grounds of race, disability, age, gender, sexual orientation, and religion or belief in the way it carries out its functions and in its employment policies and practices.

[NICE's equality scheme](#) sets out how NICE is meeting these obligations on equality and discrimination and what it still needs to do.

5 Who is involved in the process?

Table 2 Key participants in the endorsement process

<p>Resource producer</p>	<p>The resource producer is the endorsement applicant.</p> <p>The key roles of the resource producer include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • submitting sufficient background information and ensuring the resource is eligible • payment of fee • if required by NICE, reviewing the assessment report prepared by the assessor and editor and providing feedback • considering and making any amendments requested during the assessment • complying with the Terms and Conditions.
<p>NICE Accreditation and Quality Assurance Programme</p>	<p>The accreditation and quality assurance team provides project management support to the endorsement programme. The team engages with resource producers before, during, and after the endorsement process. They carry out an initial assessment of eligibility and ensure the background information is completed. They also handle the endorsement terms and conditions agreement between NICE and the resource producer.</p>
<p>NICE assessors</p>	<p>The assessor's role can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • determining compliance with the generic endorsement questions and pre-populating the assessment with the relevant recommendations and statements • contributing to the assessment report based on the resource producer's background information and the resource • preparing the final statement if possible • discussing the outcome with the resource producer and providing support if additional work is recommended.

<p>NICE editors</p>	<p>Editors have an in depth understanding of NICE guidance recommendations or quality standards statements and support the endorsement programme by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • determining compliance with the NICE recommendations or statements in question • contributing to the assessment report • finalising the endorsement statement.
<p>NICE Public Involvement Programme</p>	<p>The NICE Public Involvement programme may carry out an initial filter for patient-related resources to gauge whether they are relevant for endorsement.</p>
<p>NICE Publication Executive</p>	<p>NICE Publication Executive review and approve the publication of the final endorsement statement.</p>
<p>Communications team</p>	<p>The communications team support the programme with publicity and uploading information to the website.</p>
<p>Finance team</p>	<p>The finance team support the implementation of any fees for endorsement.</p>

6 Updating the endorsement process manual

The project team will review and update (if required) this manual every 3 years. The revision process will be carried out sooner if significant change is needed before the 3-year review date. It may also be necessary to make minor changes to the endorsement process before 3 years. Minor changes are those that:

- do not add or remove a fundamental stage in the process
- do not fundamentally alter the criteria used for endorsement
- do not add or remove a fundamental technique or step
- will not disadvantage one or more stakeholders
- will improve the efficiency, clarity or fairness of the process or methodology.

Changes meeting these criteria are published on the endorsement pages of the NICE website 20 working days before their implementation. Any changes made after publication are noted.

7 Further information

Further information about the Endorsement Programme is available on the [endorsement pages](#) of the NICE website.

8 Feedback and complaints procedure

The project team seeks feedback on the assessment of support resources designed to support putting NICE guidance into practice. Three months after a resource has been endorsed the producer may be contacted and asked to provide feedback on their experience of seeking endorsement. Twelve months after endorsement the producer may be contacted and asked to provide feedback on the benefits and experience of endorsement. At either stage the producer may be asked about any other related issues in the use of their resource such as implementation issues.

More general feedback, such as queries or complaints on the endorsement processes or decisions, may be sent to NICE through its [feedback facility](#). A response will be sent within 20 working days.

If there is a complaint about how the endorsement process has been undertaken, the project team may undertake a review of the resource. A review may happen at any time if a complaint is received, and may justify an interim review with presentation to the NICE Publication Executive. Where the decision is taken to review a resource, the producer will be notified of the action being taken and informed of the outcome of the review.

Appendix 1 Endorsement of guidance and quality standards resources: assessment criteria

NICE endorsement analysis

The full analysis leading to the endorsement decision is shown below.

1. Scope and purpose criteria – An analysis of the resource scope

Criterion	1. Scope and purpose	Evidence of meeting criteria	Overall assessment
1.1	Does the resource producer specify the NICE guidance or quality standard that the resource relates to? Which NICE guidance recommendations and/or quality standard statements does the resource cover?		Criterion met/not fully met/not met
1.2	Does the producer indicate if content goes beyond what NICE says with a rationale for this?		Criterion met/not fully met/not met
1.3	Does the resource address recommendations and/or statements with (potentially) poor uptake, identified difficulties in implementation or involving a significant change to practice?		Criterion met/not fully met/not met
1.4	Does the majority of the resource relate to NICE guidance and/or quality standards? It is not sufficient for just a small part of the resource to support implementation of guidance.		Criterion met/not fully met/not met
1.5	Is the intended user of the resource clear? If the intended users include patients has the resource been produced by an Information Standard certified producer?		Criterion met/not fully met/not met

2. Resource properties criteria – An analysis of the generic resource properties

Criterion	2. Resource properties	Evidence of meeting criteria	Overall assessment
2.1	Is there a process for handling resource updates including when they would happen aside of guidance recommendations or quality standard statements updates?		Criterion met/not fully met/not met
2.2	Can the resource be used in a UK health setting with no amendments required? If amendments are needed can they be made?		Criterion met/not fully met/not met
2.3	Can the resource be used as is or does it need other things to function, such as specific software, licensing or a fee paid?		Criterion met/not fully met/not met
2.4	Does the resource address potential sources of bias, such as using other sources of information, sponsorship or focus?		Criterion met/not fully met/not met
2.5	Did the producer involve relevant stakeholders/intended users in developing the resource? If not does the producer explain why not?		Criterion met/not fully met/not met

3. Recommendations criteria

Does the resource output align to the recommendations in the guidance/statements in the quality standard? Is the wording used in the resource consistent with NICE guidance/quality standard and not in conflict with it?

Criterion	3. Recommendations	Evidence of meeting criteria	Overall assessment
3.1	Do any aspects of the resource contradict NICE guidance and/or quality standards either directly or by omitting parts of recommendations or statements?		Criterion met/not fully met/not met
3.2	<add relevant recommendation/ statement>		Criterion met/not fully met/not met
3.3	<add relevant recommendation/ statement>		Criterion met/not fully met/not met
3.4	<add relevant recommendation/ statement>		Criterion met/not fully met/not met
3.5	<add relevant recommendation/statement>		Criterion met/not fully met/not met

Other issues

About this manual

This process manual describes the processes involved in endorsing resources produced by external organisations that support the implementation of NICE guidance and the use of quality standards in part or in full.

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 (April 2016)

Copyright

© Copyright National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, 2016. All rights reserved. This material may be freely reproduced for educational and not-for-profit purposes. No reproduction by or for commercial organisations, or for commercial purposes, is allowed without the express written permission of NICE.

ISBN: 978-1-4731-1850-8