

The NICE Technology Appraisal process assesses the clinical and cost-effectiveness of new and existing technologies (e.g. drugs, surgical procedures, therapies) to make recommendations for their use in the NHS. Patient and carer organisations who comment on draft scopes, submit evidence on patient views, and comment on draft guidance produced by NICE. Individual patients and carers who attend committee meetings as Patient Experts.

Examples of patient input that the NICE appraisal committee has found helpful:

Patient views on the effects of treatment: in an appraisal of drugs for short-term management of insomnia, the research evidence suggested that addiction was not a particular problem for the newer drugs. This was not the experience of the patients and carers who submitted evidence. The final guidance recommended that both the newer and older drugs should not be used for long periods of time.

Patient views on the relevance of outcome measures used in research: in the appraisal of drugs for the treatment of psoriasis, in research studies, the severity of the condition was measured as the proportion of the patient's skin affected by psoriasis. However, patient and carer contributions indicated that what really influences the quality of life of patients with psoriasis is not just how much skin is affected, but where on the body the condition occurs (e.g. in skin flexures or on the face). The outcome measure used in the published research was therefore seen to be imprecise and the recommendations were modified to include measures of quality of life.

Patient views on the acceptability of new treatments: in the appraisal of a group of drugs for the treatment of advanced ovarian cancer, it became clear that although one of the new drugs was less toxic than conventional treatment, certain side-effects would outweigh the positive effects in some cases. Evidence submitted by patients and carers showed that because the drugs could cause the skin on hands and feet to flake and scale, everyday life could become so difficult for women that they might opt not to have treatment. The Appraisal Committee considered this in their deliberations.

Clinical Guidelines

Contributing to a NICE clinical guideline – a guide for patient and

carer groups In April 2006, the PPIP will be publishing a "how to" guide on contributing to a NICE clinical guideline. Written specifically for patients and carers (organisations and individuals), the guide goes through the guideline development process step-by-step, explaining: how organisations can contribute through the stakeholder consultation process, and the role of patient and carer members of Guideline Development Groups. The guide gives tips and suggestions, including what to look for when commenting on draft guideline documents. We welcome your feedback on "A guide for patient and carer groups", which will be available as a booklet and on the NICE website at www.nice.org.uk.

Public Health Guidance

NICE now has responsibility for publishing two types of public health guidance, "interventions" and "programme" guidance. The PPIP is working with NICE's public health team to ensure that patients and the public are involved in this work. **Public Health "interventions"** guidance makes recommendations on specific types of activities provided by local organisations either to reduce people's risk of ill-health or to promote or maintain healthy lifestyles. NICE "interventions" topics include:

**Smoking cessation in primary care
Methods to increase physical activity**

Preventing sexually transmitted infections, and preventing pregnancies in the under 18s

Three lay members have been recruited to the new **Public Health Interventions Advisory Committee (PHIAC)** involved in the production of "interventions" guidance. **Public Health "programme"** guidance deals with broader action than "interventions". It is developed by Programme Development Groups, which include patient/public members. Forthcoming topics include:

Supporting attitude & behaviour change

The optimal provision of smoking cessation services

Improving the nutrition of pregnant and breastfeeding mothers, and children

Further details on how NICE public health guidance is developed can be found at:

www.publichealth.nice.org.uk/page.aspx?o=CPHEOperatingModel.

Interventional Procedures Producing NICE guidance on Interventional Procedures

An interventional procedure is a procedure used to diagnose or treat an illness or condition, often involving surgery, the use of x-rays or other methods of investigating the inside of a patient's body. NICE guidance on interventional procedures considers how safe a procedure is, and whether it works well enough to be used routinely in the NHS. NICE Interventional Procedures guidance is produced by the **Interventional Procedures Advisory Committee (IPAC)**, which includes two lay members. Michael Davidson, lay IPAC member said: "I have found members of the committee extremely respectful of my lay position, generous in sharing information and [they have] a genuine preparedness to accept me as a contributor and not as an 'ornament'".

Consultation process

Patients and carers (organisations and individuals) can comment on draft interventional procedures guidance when it is posted on the website for consultation. Joanna Pearl, the new PPIP Project Manager, can advise on how to register an interest and comment on any piece of interventional procedures guidance.

Implementation of NICE recommendations

Dedicated teams at NICE are working with local NHS organisations and other bodies to promote the uptake of recommendations made in both clinical and public health guidance. The PPIP promotes and supports patient organisations and groups such as Patient and Public Involvement Forums and Patient Advice Liaison Services (PALS), individual patients and members of the public to help push the implementation agenda forward. For Clinical Guidelines, NICE holds a planning meeting towards the final stages of a guideline's development. Key stakeholders, including patient organisations, are invited to discuss the major implementation issues for each individual guideline. If there are significant issues relating to a particular guideline that you would like to raise at the planning meeting, please contact the relevant PPIP Project Manager.

Details can be found on the guideline-specific pages of the website at www.nice.org.uk.