

NHS QIS Process for Technology Appraisal Guidance Published by
the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This process supersedes that published by the NHS Quality Improvement Scotland in July 2003. In recognition of the needs and expectations of decision-makers in Scotland, NHS Quality Improvement Scotland (NHS QIS) advises on Technology Appraisal Guidance published by NICE (NICE Appraisals) after 1 May 2001.
- 1.2 NICE now publishes two forms of Technology Appraisal Guidance - Multiple Technology Appraisals (MTAs) and Single Technology Appraisals (STAs). Only NICE MTAs are processed by NHS QIS as described in this paper.
- 1.3 In 2006 when NICE started publishing STAs it was agreed with the Scottish Executive (now Scottish Government) that SMC would remain the source of advice on new drugs, indications and formulations to NHSScotland. Consequently NHS QIS does not “process” NICE STAs and emails on NICE STAs to NHSScotland are for information only.
- 1.4 NHS QIS considers the suitability of the NICE MTAs for Scotland in the light of the following contextual differences:
 - Policies, principles and values of NHSScotland
 - Epidemiology (frequency, distribution and stage at presentation)
 - Structure and provision of services in Scotland
 - Other implications for NHSScotland, e.g. rural issues, predicted uptake, existing advice from the Scottish Medicines Consortium.
- 1.5 NHS QIS issues the NICE MTA identifying any contextual differences via email and the web. It also highlights any further work being undertaken to provide support for NHSScotland on planning for the implementation of NICE MTAs, for example, by itself, the Scottish Health Technologies Group, National Services Scotland National Procurement, Scottish Government, or other advisory bodies. Details such as timescales and contact persons are provided whenever possible where additional work is being undertaken.

- 1.6 This new revised procedure is based on 5 years of experience of using the previous process including two years of NICE STAs.

2. Process

2.1 Review of draft NICE Multiple Technology Appraisal (MTA) documents

2.1.3 At the start of the NICE MTA process, one “lead” expert is identified to follow the NICE MTA through the whole process, including commenting on the NICE technology assessment report (the scientific report on the clinical and cost effectiveness of the health technology). At the same time a wider group of experts are identified who comment on the draft MTA reports at the Appraisal Consultation Document (ACD) and Final Appraisal Determination (FAD) stages.

2.1.3 When the NICE Appraisal Consultation Document (ACD) – the first draft NICE MTA report - is issued (usually at least thirteen weeks before the NICE MTA is published barring any appeal), NHS QIS staff work with the experts to comment on its content and input to the NICE process. The experts are also asked to identify relevant contextual differences in Scotland (as outlined in section 1.4), and are also asked to identify any issues relevant to Scotland which may require further work.

2.1.3 When the Final Appraisal Determination (FAD) – the second draft NICE MTA report - is released for comment (usually at least five weeks before the NICE MTA is published if there is no appeal), the FAD is reviewed by the same group of experts.

2.2 Expert involvement

2.2.1 Sources of experts include – but are not limited to – those from Managed Clinical Networks, Royal Colleges, Area Drugs and Therapeutic Committees, SIGN guideline groups, Scottish Government Health Directorates, NHS QIS Project Groups and patient representative or voluntary groups. Experts are required to sign a confidentiality undertaking and register all interests. All documentation of this process (including expert comments) is subject to the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act.

2.3 Processed NICE MTAs

2.3.1 NHS QIS issues the NICE MTA to Scotland via email with a message outlining any implications for Scotland. The goal is to issue this email to coincide with publication of the NICE MTA. The NHS QIS website also

indicates that the NICE MTA has been issued in Scotland and the text of the email is posted there. As noted in 1.5, it also highlights any further work being undertaken to provide support for NHSScotland on planning for the implementation of NICE MTAs, including further details whenever possible.

2.3.2 This email is sent to all NHS Board Chief Executives for action who are expected to cascade it appropriately.

2.3.3 Using the subscription section on the NHS QIS website (<http://www.htbs.co.uk/subscriptions/index.asp?did=398>), anyone can request to receive the NICE appraisal and associated NHS QIS email.

2.4 NICE Single Technology Appraisals (STAs)

2.4.1 NHS QIS receives the NICE documentation for STAs but does not seek any experts to comment on the documents. NHS QIS shares the documents with SMC. The NHS QIS email on NICE STAs is sent to NHS Board Chief Executives for information only.

2.4.2 SMC identifies differences in advice between NICE STA recommendations and SMC advice. SMC advises the SGHD of any differences and if any further action is required.

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