



meeting	HEALTH SELECT COMMITTEE
date	21 March 2006
	agenda item number

Report of the Chair of the Health Select Committee

National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE)

Purpose of the report

1. To provide the Health Select Committee with an opportunity to consider the relationship of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) with primary healthcare in Nottinghamshire.

Background

2. NICE is the independent organisation responsible for providing national guidance on the promotion of good health and the prevention and treatment of ill health.
3. Currently NICE produces guidance in three areas of health:
 - Technology appraisals - guidance on the use of new and existing medicines and treatments within the NHS in England and Wales.
 - Clinical guidelines - guidance on the appropriate treatment and care of people with specific diseases and conditions within the NHS in England and Wales.
 - Interventional procedures - guidance on whether interventional procedures used for diagnosis or treatment are safe enough and work well enough for routine use in England, Wales and Scotland.
4. A brief explanation of NICE Guidance, supplied by Rushcliffe Primary Care Trust (PCT) is attached at Annex A.
5. NHS Quality Improvement Scotland (NHS QIS) was established as a Special Health Board by the Scottish Executive in 2003, in order to act as the lead organisation in improving the quality of healthcare delivered by NHS Scotland.

6. The role of NHS QIS is to:

- Provide clear advice and guidance to NHS Scotland on effective clinical practice, in order that changes can be made to the benefit of patients. Advice and guidance is based on a thorough review of the evidence available.
- Set clinical and non-clinical standards of care to help improve performance and set targets for continuous service improvement. Such standards show the public the level of care they can expect.
- Review and monitor the performance of NHS Scotland to determine how well NHS services are performing against the targets that are set. Instances of serious service failure within NHS Scotland will also be investigated by NHS QIS and recommendations made to prevent their reoccurrence.
- Support and encourage NHS Scotland staff in improving services through running development programmes, publishing best practice statements and organising conferences and events that will aid the sharing of best practice.
- Promote patient safety by learning from past experiences and putting arrangements in place that will ensure that patients are safe at all times.

Issues

7. Dr Mary Corcoran, Director of Public Health, Gedling Primary Care Trust (PCT) is the lead for Broxtowe & Hucknall, Gedling, Nottingham City and Rushcliffe PCTs will be attending the meeting to provide information to the Select Committee.
8. Nottinghamshire PCTs have been asked to supply the following information to assist the Select Committee:
- Does the PCT decide on policy for clinicians to follow when diagnosing and treating illness?
 - Does the PCT update those policies (ie when new treatments are identified, when NICE guidance is issued)?
 - Are there any treatments that have been recommended by NICE (that are within the remit of PCTs) that are not available from the PCT?
 - Are there any treatments available elsewhere in the UK, for example those approved by NHS Quality Improvement Scotland (NHS QIS) that have yet to be recommended by NICE that the PCT provides/wishes to provide?

- Does the PCT provide Herceptin for HER – 2 Positive early stage breast cancer?
 - What criteria has been used in determining whether or not to supply Herceptin for HER – 2 Positive early stage breast cancer?
 - What is the PCT's perception of the role of NICE in tackling health inequalities and the 'postcode lottery.'
9. A summary of the responses received is attached at Annex B. Dr Corcoran has provided comments applicable to Broxtowe, Gedling, Nottingham City and Rushcliffe PCTs and these are attached at Annex C.

Options

10. The Select Committee may wish to consider further information on the effectiveness of NICE in Nottinghamshire.
11. Additionally the Select Committee may wish to consider the relationship of NICE with the acute trusts.

Recommendations

12. It is recommended that

The Health Select Committee consider the information provided and identifies issues that require further consideration.

Councillor James T Napier
Chair, Health Select Committee

Background papers: correspondence from PCTs.