



meeting	JOINT HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	
date	8 July 2008	agenda item number

Report of the Chair of the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee

National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE)

Purpose of the report

1. To provide Members with an opportunity to consider the work of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) and how it can contribute to the work of the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee.

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. NICE has traditionally produced 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.

Issues

4. In April 2008 NICE wrote to local authority scrutiny functions offering to attend health overview and scrutiny committee meetings or informal briefings to discuss their work. NICE stated:

“Although much of our guidance refers to clinical practice in the NHS, in recent years our remit has broadened to include public health and so an increasing amount of NICE guidance also has direct relevance

for local authorities, voluntary bodies, employers and the wider public. As our role has developed we have been keen to develop links with partners in local government.”

5. A copy of the letter from NICE is attached as an appendix to this report.
6. Val Moore, Implementation Consultant, and Cross Institute Lead for Collaboration on Health Improvement and Social Care will be attending the meeting and will provide the Joint Committee with a presentation. A copy is attached as an appendix to this report

Recommendations

7. It is recommended that

The Joint Health Scrutiny Committee consider the information provided and identifies issues that require further consideration or areas where NICE could assist in the delivery of the Joint Committee’s work programme.

Councillor Chris Winterton
Chair, Joint Health Scrutiny Committee

Background papers: nil

Further Background Information - Scotland

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.

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.