

# NICE Implementation Collaborative – Concordat

# Foreword

Innovation has always been at the heart of the NHS. Access to innovative medicines, technologies, devices, diagnostics and treatments has transformed the lives of the whole population, allowing millions to live longer, healthier and happier lives. Rapidly adopting innovations that improve quality is a priority for us all.

Innovation, Health & Wealth: Accelerating Adoption and Diffusion in the NHS, sets out the actions we must take to make innovation and its spread central to all that we do. It includes a series of actions that together will deliver game changing improvements to the quality and value of care, making the spread of innovation core business for the NHS.

In NICE we have a well-respected organisation that produces authoritative evidence-based guidance on the use of specific medicines and technologies. And yet there is considerable variation in the implementation of its guidance.

The spread of innovation is a challenge in all industries, but the scale and complexity of the NHS poses particular difficulties. That is why we have established the NICE Implementation Collaborative (NIC).

The NIC will harness the skills, experience and dedication of organisations and individuals from across the healthcare system to support faster and more consistent access to NICE-recommended medicines, treatments and technologies. This independent partnership between the NHS, the life sciences industry, healthcare professional bodies, patient advocates and key health organisations heralds a collaborative approach that will improve patient outcomes for the whole population.

This Concordat sets out the ambition and values by which all partners will work together. It is supported by all partners and strengthens our resolve to support patient access to NICE recommended medicines, technologies, devices, diagnostics and treatments.

**Sir Ron Kerr**

*Chair of the NICE Implementation  
Collaborative (NIC)*

**Miles Ayling**

*Director of Innovation,  
NHS Commissioning Board*

# Introduction

The publication of the NHS Chief Executive’s review of Innovation is the latest report to document the many brilliant examples of pioneering work, great ideas and fantastic improvements happening right across the NHS. **Innovation, Health & Wealth** sets out a challenging agenda for action to take those examples, amongst others, and spread them at pace and scale, and to make innovation everyone’s business.

## “ Innovation, Health and Wealth: Accelerating adoption and diffusion in the NHS ”

One critical action is the creation of a NICE Implementation Collaborative (NIC) to drive implementation of NICE guidance where there is slow or inconsistent uptake across the NHS. Going forward, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) will be responsible for determining appropriate and affordable prioritisation of NHS services based on local needs. The NIC will bring together individuals and organisations that have a stake in NICE guidance being implemented effectively.

NICE is a well-recognised, trusted and established body that ensures its guidance and guidelines are cost effective and clinically robust. NICE produces a range of guidance, including Technology Appraisals on the use of specific medicines and technologies. NICE Technology Appraisals are backed by a statutory funding direction which requires the NHS to fund these technologies, in line with NICE guidance, where clinically appropriate. NICE clinical guidelines, quality standards, medical technologies guidance and other products, although not subject to a mandatory funding direction, also play a critical role in identifying innovation and best practice, and raising the standard of care, across the NHS.

The NIC will:

- Identify practical measures that support and promote timely and consistent implementation of NICE Technology Appraisals throughout the NHS in England.
- Work jointly to support and promote the adoption of all other forms of NICE guidance that apply to the NHS in England, and to drive the uptake of innovation, in a way that is consistent with local health needs and priorities.
- Understand the barriers that restrict expected levels of implementation and uptake, including the requirement for CCGs to provide care for their populations taking into account local affordability and clinical need. The NIC will identify practical measures that its members and all organisations providing NHS services to patients can take to help overcome these barriers.
- Support a culture shift within the NHS in favour of clinical and cost-effective innovation.

All the partners in the NIC have the collective ability to realise these aims, and share a commitment to working together to achieve them.

# Values

This Concordat is the first step in the creation of the NIC. It represents a shared commitment by all partners to work together, and within their own organisations, to pursue common aims and objectives.

This Concordat sets out the principles by which it will operate and signals the next steps to operationalise the NIC.

The NIC Partners also commit to drawing on expertise and knowledge from elsewhere within the healthcare system, as well as their own constituent organisation(s), in order to deliver the aims of the NIC. In particular, the Partners believe that patients are key stakeholders in creating an effective culture of innovation within the NHS and are committed to their voice informing the work of the NIC. This is consistent with the involvement of patient groups by NICE in the process of creating guidance.

All NIC Partners are committed to upholding the values identified by the NHS Commissioning Board as being central to a modern, effective and efficient healthcare system. These support a system that is:

- Focused on improving quality and outcomes.
- Active in putting patients, clinicians across all health professions and carers at the heart of decision-making.
- An energised, proactive organisation, offering leadership and direction.
- Consistently using evidence to inform its activities.
- Flexible, promoting integration, working across boundaries and performing tasks at the right level.
- Committed to working in partnership to achieve its goals.
- Cognisant of the requirements of Clinical Commissioning Groups to deliver care to a population which is sensitive to their needs and to the finite resources they have at their disposal.
- Characterised by innovation at a local level in response to local health and wellbeing priorities.
- Open and transparent in its approach, sharing information freely.
- Supportive of clear organisational accountability arrangements.

These principles will also inform and guide the work of the NIC.

# Vision

The partners of the NIC recognise that effective, optimal and rapid uptake of clinically- and cost-effective innovation is fundamental to securing improved outcomes for patients. All Partners are committed to act jointly to ensure patients access to innovative treatments and services recommended by NICE, and to overcome the barriers to widespread adoption.

# Scope of the NICE Implementation Collaborative

The NIC will work to support the implementation of relevant NICE guidance relating to the NHS in England. Relevant NICE guidance includes Technology Appraisals, clinical guidelines, medical technologies and diagnostics guidance, interventional procedures guidance and public health guidance.

The NIC recognises that the Health and Social Care Act (2012) ushers in an NHS which will see local commissioners take decisions in response to the health needs and priorities of their communities. In supporting implementation of NICE guidance the NIC is sensitive to the role of Clinical Commissioning Groups in driving innovation in a locally commissioned NHS.

Access to treatments recommended within NICE Technology Appraisals is supported by a statutory funding direction. Funding for such treatments must be made available within 90 days of the relevant technology appraisal guidance being issued. Implementation of all other NICE guidance should be based on local health needs and resources.

The NIC is committed to helping the NHS better understand and overcome the barriers to implementation of NICE guidance wherever they may exist in the system – whether that be at the point of commissioning, local procurement or at clinician level, while safeguarding the independence and autonomy of clinical decisions. In particular, the NIC acknowledges the financial pressures that exist within the NHS and is committed to helping to understand and overcome such pressures.

In supporting implementation of NICE guidance, the NIC will look at system-wide barriers that exist, at the need for a cultural change within the NHS and at issues surrounding the uptake of specific technologies, particularly where they are emblematic of more general issues. The NIC will engage representatives of all health professions to ensure clinical expertise and leadership are used to drive cultural change so that innovation flourishes. The NIC will also align its support with other levers for innovation within the system, including greater transparency of information locally, new organisations to support large scale adoption and diffusion, and financial incentives.

The NIC will use data from its member organisations and elsewhere in the system to understand the variations in uptake of NICE guidance, and will measure the effectiveness of the support it provides to the system and its impact on patient outcomes.

In addition to supporting uptake of existing NICE recommendations, the NIC will also look to the future and scan the horizon for future NICE recommendations that may require NIC support for successful implementation in the NHS.

# How the NIC will work

The NIC is a partnership between the NHS, professional and public bodies, industry representative organisations and NICE itself. By signing this Concordat the partners are committed to work together to deliver the aims of the NIC, as set out in the introduction.

Members of the NIC are equally responsible for setting its priorities and the direction of its work, and are accountable for achieving its objectives. The NIC will use objective measures to judge how effective it is in identifying and overcoming barriers to the implementation of NICE recommendations throughout the NHS in England.

The NIC will work to overcome barriers to implementation and uptake of existing NICE recommendations, and will scan for NICE recommendations that are in the development stages to identify where it can support future uptake. This will involve working with NICE as guidance is developed. Where the NIC identifies scope for improvement in the clarity of NICE guidance, it will work with NICE and other stakeholders to improve clarity and reduce barriers to implementation. The NIC partners also recognise the important role that guidance on disinvestment will play in enabling the NHS to improve levels of implementation of NICE guidance.

The partners in the NIC are committed to mobilising their own capacity to support implementation of NICE recommendations. Partners are committed to ensuring the NIC works effectively and does not place significant additional burdens on the resources of individual partner organisations.

The NIC is also committed to avoiding placing additional administrative burdens on the NHS. The NIC will draw on existing and planned sources of data and intelligence from partner organisations and elsewhere to guide its programme of work and to evaluate its effectiveness.

Senior representatives of the NIC partners will meet regularly to provide oversight of the programme of work and set the strategic direction for the NIC. However, much of the practical work will be done outside these meetings in project teams drawn from partner organisations and, as necessary, from other bodies.

The NIC will remain in operation as long as the partners:

- Believe there is a need for it in the NHS.
- Are satisfied that it continues to deliver on its agreed aims.

# Our commitment

The NIC will:

- Work in open and transparent partnership to identify and overcome barriers to implementation of NICE guidance.
- Publish the process by which it will examine issues surrounding uptake of specific NICE-recommended technologies and innovations.
- Publish its programme of work, when it will be delivered, and its intended impact.
- Regularly report on its progress, future programme of work and insights into continuing challenges in the system.

# NIC Partners

**AHSN**

Academic Health Science Networks

 **The Academy of Medical Sciences**

Academy of Medical Sciences

**ACADEMY OF MEDICAL ROYAL COLLEGES**

Academy of Medical Royal Colleges



Association of the British Healthcare Industries



Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry



British In Vitro Diagnostics Association



Foundation Trust Network



National Association of Primary Care



NHS Alliance



NHS Clinical Commissioners



NHS Commissioning Board  
(Chief Pharmaceutical Officer & Director of Innovation)



NHS Confederation



NHS Commissioning Assembly



National Institute of Health & Clinical Excellence



Patients Involved in NICE



Royal Pharmaceutical Society

**Innovation**  
health&wealth