

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CARE EXCELLENCE

QUALITY STANDARD TOPIC OVERVIEW

1 Quality standard title

Care of dying adults in the last days of life

2 Introduction

2.1 *NICE quality standards*

NICE quality standards are a concise set of prioritised statements designed to drive measurable quality improvements within a particular area of health or care.

The standards are derived from high-quality guidance, such as that from NICE or [accredited](#) by NICE. They are developed independently by NICE, in collaboration with health, public health and social care practitioners, their partners and service users. Information on priority areas, people's experience of using services, safety issues, equality and cost impact are considered during the development process.

NICE quality standards are central to supporting the government's vision for a health and social care system that is focused on delivering the best possible outcomes for people who use services, as detailed in the [Health and Social Care Act \(2012\)](#).

The quality standard development process is described in detail on the [NICE website](#).

2.2 *This topic overview*

This topic overview describes core elements of the quality standard. These include the population and topic to be covered, key source guidance to be used to underpin potential quality statements, any related quality standards,

published current practice information and national or routine indicators and performance measures.

If the source guidance is not NICE guidance, it should meet the minimum quality criteria defined in NICE's [accreditation programme](#).

3 This quality standard

This quality standard is expected to publish in March 2017.

3.1 Population and topic to be covered

This quality standard will cover the clinical care of adults (18 and over) who are dying during their last 2 to 3 days of life. This focus is based on the scope of the primary source guidance.

A separate quality standard will be developed for end of life care for infants, children and young people (under 18). A NICE guideline on [end of life care for infants, children and young people](#) is in development.

3.2 Key development sources (NICE and NICE-accredited sources)

Primary source

- [Care of dying adults in the last days of life](#) (2015) NICE guideline 31

Other sources that may be used

The following sources may be used where they relate to the population and topic covered by the quality standard.

- [Palliative care: general issues](#) (2015) NICE Clinical Knowledge Summaries
- [Palliative care: constipation](#) (2015) Clinical Knowledge Summaries
- [Palliative care: dyspnoea](#) (2015) Clinical Knowledge Summaries
- [Palliative care: nausea and vomiting](#) (2015) Clinical Knowledge Summaries
- [Palliative care: oral](#) (2015) Clinical Knowledge Summaries
- [Palliative care: secretions](#) (2015) Clinical Knowledge Summaries

- [Palliative care for adults: strong opioids for pain relief](#) (2012) NICE guideline CG140
- SCIE Guide 48 (2013) [Dying well at home: the case for integrated working](#)

Key policy documents, reports and national audits

Relevant policy documents, reports and national audits will be used to inform the development of the quality standard.

- Care Quality Commission (2016) [A different ending: Addressing inequalities in end of life care](#)
- Royal College of Physicians/Marie Curie (2016) [End of life care audit: dying in hospital national report for England 2016](#)
- Department of Health (2015) [Government response to the House of Commons Health Select Committee report on end of life care](#)
- House of Commons Health Select Committee (2015) [End of Life Care](#)
- Department of Health (2015) [Choice in end of life care](#)
- NHS England (2015) [Transforming end of life care in acute hospitals: The route to success 'how to' guide](#)
- Public Health England (2015) [National End of Life Care Intelligence Network: What we know now 2014](#)
- Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (2015) [Dying without dignity: Investigations by the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman into complaints about end of life care](#)

3.3 Related NICE quality standards

Published

- [End of life care for adults](#) (2011) NICE quality standard 13
- [Patient experience in adult NHS services](#) (2012) NICE quality standard 15

In development

- [Older people with social care needs and multiple long-term conditions](#).
Publication expected September 2016.

Future quality standards

This quality standard will be developed in the context of all quality standards referred to NICE, including the following quality standards scheduled for future development:

- End of life care for infants, children and young people
- Pain management (young people and adults)
- Service user and carer experience of social care
- Supporting decision-making in people who lack mental capacity

The full list of quality standard topics referred to NICE is available from the [quality standard topic library](#) on the NICE website.

4 Existing indicators

- Office for National Statistics (2015) [National Survey of Bereaved People \(VOICES\): England, 2015](#)
- Public Health England [End of life care profiles](#)
- Royal College of Physicians (2016) [End of Life Care Audit – Dying in Hospital](#)

5 Further information

See the NICE website for more information about [NICE quality standards](#) and the [progress of this quality standard](#).