

Perineal biopsy devices for diagnosis of prostate cancer in people with suspected prostate cancer

A prostate biopsy is used for the diagnosis of prostate cancer in people referred to secondary care with suspected prostate cancer. There are 2 methods for prostate biopsy: transrectal and transperineal. In a transrectal prostate biopsy, samples of prostate tissue are collected using a biopsy needle inserted through the rectal wall via the anus. However, this can result in some people getting serious infections, requiring hospital admission and antibiotics. More than 65% of all prostate biopsies in the NHS use the transrectal method. Transperineal biopsy offers an alternative method, in which the biopsy needle enters the body through the perineum, the skin area between the anus and the scrotum. New perineal biopsy devices are designed to allow for a targeted, diagnostic prostate biopsy through the transperineal route and require a limited number of punctures of the skin. Compared with transrectal biopsy, the use of these perineal biopsy devices could reduce pain during and after prostate biopsy. They could also lower the risk of serious infection such as sepsis, reduce antibiotic use and complications related hospital admissions.

The NICE diagnostics assessment programme will assess the clinical and cost-effectiveness evidence of perineal biopsy devices in order to make recommendations on their use in the NHS.