

# NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CARE EXCELLENCE

## NICE guidelines

### Equality impact assessment

#### Children's Attachment

The impact on equality has been assessed during guidance development according to the principles of the NICE equality policy.

#### Guideline development: before consultation

3.1 Have the potential equality issues identified during the scoping process been addressed by the Committee, and, if so, how?

Yes, the review protocols explicitly included the areas identified in the scope as potential factors for subgroup analyses. Where there was little evidence, discussion was based on good practice and collective GC experience and consensus. Results were extrapolated where feasible and appropriate.

3.2 Have any **other** potential equality issues (in addition to those identified during the scoping process) been identified, and, if so, how has the Committee addressed them?

The GC considered this in their discussions and the following recommendations were drafted in the general principles section of the guideline to ensure inclusion of all children and all types of parents/carers:

*Ensure that all children, young people and their parents or carers get equal access to interventions for attachment difficulties regardless of their placement (foster, special guardianship, kinship or residential care), whether they are:*

- *are on the edge of care or adopted from care,*
- *are from an ethnic minority group*
- *have a disability or a mental health problem or*
- *they are from the UK or overseas.*

3.2 Have any **other** potential equality issues (in addition to those identified during the scoping process) been identified, and, if so, how has the Committee addressed them?

*Assess all children and young people who enter the UK as unaccompanied immigrants for attachment difficulties once a stable placement has been found, and offer interventions and support if needed.*

A further recommendation was drafted to include children who have attachment difficulties and also a mental health problem:

*Offer children and young people who have or may have attachment difficulties, and who also have a mental health problem or neurodevelopmental condition, interventions as recommended in the relevant NICE guideline (for example, antisocial behaviour and conduct disorders in children and young people, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, autism, post-traumatic stress disorder, social anxiety disorder, depression in children and young people and alcohol-use disorders).*

Young people and adolescents were identified as an additional subgroup as it became apparent from the valuable input from the care leaver and carer representatives, that adolescents have specific needs that were often overlooked in current practice.

Recommendations drafted included the following where children of different ages and developmental stages were addressed:

*Actively involve children and young people, and their parents or current carers, in the process of entering the care system or changing placement. This may include:*

- *explaining the reasons for the move*
- *familiarising the child or young person with their new carers and placement (for example, by arranging a pre-placement visit or showing them photographs of their new carers and home)*
- *providing ongoing support during transitions*
- *making sure the child or young person has the opportunity to ask questions and make choices whenever appropriate and possible*
- *supporting the child in maintaining relationships with their parents or previous carers for as long as they feel the need to*
- *taking account of the needs of children at different ages and developmental stages including needs related to their mental health and any physical disabilities.*

*Modify interventions for young people when needed to allow for:*

- *physical and sexual development*
- *transition to adolescence*
- *re-awakening of emotions about their birth parents or original family.*

*Take into account that these factors can complicate therapeutic interventions and relationships with foster carers and adoptive parents. Discuss making contact with their birth parents or original family sensitively.*

3.3 Were the Committee's considerations of equality issues described in the consultation document, and, if so, where?

Discussions in the consultation document can be found here:

Chapter 5 (environmental factors) considered parents at a social disadvantage (e.g. ethnic minorities), mental health problems in parents, children who have been maltreated.

Chapter 6 (process and arrangement features) considered equal access to appropriate interventions, unaccompanied immigrants (the fact that the population may be traumatised was also discussed), ensuring that stability/instability of placement would not determine access to psychological interventions or other services, ethnic minorities, children who have a mental health problem, children with a disability and children of parents who have a substance abuse or mental health problem.

Chapter 9 (psychosocial interventions in all settings) specifically considered interventions for children in care, on the edge of care and adopted from care. Although the guideline population consists of these groups, interventions in each setting were looked at separately. Kinship care, special guardianship and residential care were also addressed in the guideline. In addition, an intervention for all children and young people who enter the UK as unaccompanied immigrants was recommended (once a stable placement had been found). For children on the edge of care, the families who were considered at risk of having attachment difficulties included parents at a social disadvantage, parents with substance abuse problems and mental health problems.

3.4 Do the preliminary recommendations make it more difficult in practice for a specific group to access services compared with other groups? If so, what are the barriers to, or difficulties with, access for the specific group?

No.

3.5 Is there potential for the preliminary recommendations to have an adverse impact on people with disabilities because of something that is a consequence of the disability?

No.

3.6 Are there any recommendations or explanations that the Committee could make to remove or alleviate barriers to, or difficulties with, access to services identified in questions 3.1, 3.2 or 3.3, or otherwise fulfil NICE's obligation to advance equality?

No.

## 4.0 Final guideline

4.1 Have any additional potential equality issues been raised during the consultation, and, if so, how has the Committee addressed them?

No additional equality issues have been raised during the consultation.

4.2 If the recommendations have changed after consultation, are there any recommendations that make it more difficult in practice for a specific group to access services compared with other groups? If so, what are the barriers to, or difficulties with, access for the specific group?

No changes have been made to make it more difficult in practice for a specific group to access services.

4.3 If the recommendations have changed after consultation, is there potential for the recommendations to have an adverse impact on people with disabilities because of something that is a consequence of the disability?

No changes have been made with the potential to have an adverse impact on people with disabilities.

4.4 If the recommendations have changed after consultation, are there any recommendations or explanations that the Committee could make to remove or alleviate barriers to, or difficulties with, access to services identified in questions 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4, or otherwise fulfil NICE's obligations to advance equality?

No changes have been made that would cause barriers to accessing services.

4.5 Have the Committee's considerations of equality issues been described in the final guideline document, and, if so, where?

Discussions in the consultation document can be found here:

Chapter 5 (environmental factors) considered parents at a social disadvantage (e.g. ethnic minorities), mental health problems in parents, children who have been maltreated.

Chapter 6 (process and arrangement features) considered equal access to appropriate interventions, unaccompanied immigrants (the fact that the population may be traumatised was also discussed), ensuring that stability/instability of placement would not determine access to psychological interventions or other services, ethnic minorities, children who have a mental health problem, children with a disability and children of parents who have a substance abuse or mental health problem.

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