

# NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CARE EXCELLENCE

## HealthTech programme

### Equality impact assessment: scoping

#### Compression products for treating venous leg ulcers: Late-stage assessment

The impact on equality has been assessed during this evaluation according to the principles of the [NICE Equality scheme](#).

1. Have any potential equality issues been identified during the development of the topic briefing note or during selection, and, if so, what are they?

- There are several factors that can increase people's risk for developing venous leg ulcers. These include pregnancy, obesity or being overweight, people with a history of deep vein thrombosis, varicose veins, hernias previous ulcers or previous surgery to the leg such as hip or knee replacement. Furthermore, people with increasing age, restricted movement, sedentary lifestyle, prolonged standing and limited range of ankle function may also have a higher risk.
- Venous leg ulcers occur in people from all socioeconomic groups, but ulcers take longer to heal, and recurrence rates are higher in people from lower socioeconomic groups. People with low incomes may struggle to access appointments and people without a fixed address or in prison may struggle to access treatment. Some people, for example people with limited understanding of English language when no interpretation support is available or people with mental health conditions or a learning disability, may find it harder to understand or follow a treatment plan, which can negatively impact on healing. Furthermore, people who smoke, have alcohol dependency, use drugs or have nutritional deficiencies also have impaired healing.
- Compression therapy should be used with caution in people with diabetes, who may have unreliable ankle brachial pressure index (ABPIs) due to arterial calcification as well as an underlying sensory neuropathy (NICE CKS, 2024). For some people with arterial insufficiency, neuropathy or advanced, unstable cardiac failure, reduced compression may be needed because strong compression can be unsafe or painful.
- Some compression products such as hosiery and wraps need the person to apply the products themselves. This could be harder for people with

conditions that may affect self-care for example because of issues with memory (for example dementia), manual dexterity, mobility or visibility.

- Compression hosiery is often offered in different colours such as beige, black or white. However, some products may only be available in 1 colour (beige or white). People may prefer to choose hosiery that most closely matches their skin tone if this is available. Compression products with latex are not suitable for people with latex allergy.

Age, disability, sex, race, pregnancy and maternity are all protected characteristics under the Equality Act (2010).

**2.** What is the preliminary view as to what extent these potential equality issues need addressing by the committee?

The committee should consider all the equality issues when making recommendations and note that not all compression products will be suitable for everyone.

**3.** Has any change to the draft scope been agreed to highlight potential equality issues?

Potential equality issues or considerations have been highlighted in section 3.1 of the final scope. The following have also been included as a subgroup:

- People with conditions that may impact self-care (such as issues with memory, manual dexterity, mobility and visibility)

**4.** Have any additional stakeholders related to potential equality issues been identified during the scoping process, and, if so, have changes to the stakeholder list been made?

No additional stakeholders related to potential equality issues were identified during the scoping process.

**Approved by Associate Director:** Emily Eaton Turner

**Date:** 27/08/2024