Working alongside people and communities at NICE

## A three-year strategy for involvement and engagement

## 2024 to 2027

**Draft for consultation**

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# About NICE

NICE’s purpose is to help practitioners and commissioners get the best care to people fast, while ensuring value for the taxpayer. We’ve achieved this for over 20 years through our principles of independence, transparency and rigour. These are principles that are globally respected and will never be compromised.

Since NICE was established in 1999, we have delivered vast amounts of guidance – more than many other health technology assessment bodies across the globe. But health and care has changed rapidly since our inception, and so we too must evolve. Our principles, and the fundamental priorities remain the same. But given these new pressures, we're evolving to meet the changing needs of health and care professionals who use our guidance and, crucially, the people and communities who should expect the best health and care outcomes that matter most to them.

To do this, we will develop and grow our approach to engaging and involving our communities to ensure they can effectively impact and influence what we do. This transformation will ensure we can meet the opportunities and challenges of the changing health and care landscape. It will also enable us to have a demonstrable impact on health and care outcomes and maintain our role in helping to deliver the most effective and affordable care.

# Background

We know the value that the expertise and experiences of people and communities bring to our work at NICE, and in our recommendations to the health and care system. To help us understand what we were doing well and what could be improved, we commissioned an independent review and listening exercise to reflect on how we currently involve and engage people and communities.

Its purpose was to consider how we can have more impactful involvement and engagement at NICE. The independent review, conducted by Dr Charlotte Augst, found brilliant work and impactful engagement already happening in the production of NICE guidance, but our stakeholders and staff felt that we could further develop and build upon the work done to date. We were urged to be more curious about what matters to people and communities and in doing so, ensure we clearly heard from communities who are often marginalised and underrepresented.

This work has underpinned the development of a new 3-year strategy for people and community involvement and engagement at NICE.

# A strategy for the future

At NICE, we have always been passionate about involving people and communities in the work that we do. Now, we want to outline our commitment to build upon this passion to prioritise the involvement, engagement and influence of people and communities across our organisation.

This strategy describes how we will improve the way we capture the collective wisdom and experiences of the people and communities we serve by 2027. Improving how we involve and engage people and communities within our work will ensure our guidance is relevant and impactful, which should improve guidance uptake and ultimately provide the best care to people.

This strategy is our roadmap for the next 3 years to adopting a NICE-wide, innovative approach to involvement and engagement, where people and communities feel safe and empowered to work with us in partnership to impact and influence our guidance. We will use the principles outlined in this strategy to ensure that involvement and engagement with people and communities is approached with respect and is pragmatic and purposeful.

Our strategy will define where we will focus annually, over the next three years and how we will work with partners, stakeholders and staff. This allows everyone who works with NICE to understand our approach and what they can expect when we work together.

# Developing our strategy together

NICE can’t develop a strategy for involving and engaging people and communities on its own.

Building on the independent review and listening exercise, we engaged with people, communities and stakeholders who work with NICE to test and validate our proposed approach. Development of the strategy has been a collaborative effort with input, guidance and expertise provided by a range of individuals and groups.

Carried out over 30 dedicated interviews with members of the public and the community we serve, as well as colleagues at NICE.

Analysed over 80 responses to our survey from the NICE Expert Patient Panel, Voluntary and Community Sector Forum and NICE committee members.

Conducted four dedicated focus groups to capture insights and hear directly from our workforce and people and partners who work closely with NICE.

Appraised the direction and scope of the strategy throughout development with colleagues, partners and stakeholders.

We’ve endeavoured to maximise input from the people and communities we serve alongside other, trusted and valued stakeholders including representatives from the Voluntary and Community Sector, our own workforce and a range of experts in this field.

This has resulted in a strategy that will form the foundation of how we work together going forward.

# The scope of the strategy

NICE’s purpose is to get the best care to people fast, while ensuring value for the taxpayer.

Understanding what matters most to people, communities and the wider public informs the priorities of NICE, set against the context of the health and care landscape that we serve. As well as the development and implementation of the guidance we produce, our work must also consider wider public and societal opinion on what we prioritise, the best practice methodology and research evidence available, and the value that new medicines, health technology, procedures and guidelines bring to the health and care system.

This strategy specifically defines the best-practice approach we will take for involvement and engagement during development and implementation of NICE guidance. The outcome is to improve the impact of our guidance and ensure the best care for people and communities.

This strategy does not consider how we consider wider public and societal opinion on what we prioritise and value, our best practice approach to methodology and research evidence, and the value that new medicines, health technology, procedures and clinical guidelines bring to the health and care system. While this informs the strategic direction and approach NICE takes, this work is within the scope of the NICE Listens public engagement programme, the NICE prioritisation framework and Board and is reflected in the best-practice methods we use to develop our guidance and assess value through health technology appraisals.

# Getting the language right

Using the right language can be difficult; word choices can exclude certain groups, individuals or communities.

In the past, we have referred to ‘public involvement’ at NICE. We also interchange the terms ‘patient, public, people and community’ and ‘involvement and engagement’. Throughout our work, we hope that the terms ‘people’ and ‘community’ reflects the multiple individuals and groups that we work with. This includes but is not limited to; patients, carers, people who use health and social care services, their families and voluntary and community organisations. We have used the term ‘involvement and engagement’ to encompass the range of best-practice approaches we wish to adopt, from consultation through to decision-making.

Our intention is to be inclusive, giving those that both need and want to be involved every chance to do so. We will always endeavour to use language that reflects this intention.

Over time, as we learn more and best practice evolves, our language may change. We commit to continue to test and learn with people, communities and partners, to ensure we use appropriate terminology throughout all our engagement.

# Our approach

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| 1vision | 5Key areas of focus | 12Guiding principles |

We want to keep our approach as simple as possible.

* We have 1 single vision: “To have a best-practice approach to involvement and engagement, to improve the impact of our guidance and ensure the best care for people and communities”.
* We will realise this vision by delivering against 5 key areas of focus, each of which has a number of measurable aims to help us realise our vision over the next three years.
* We will adopt 12 guiding principles that will underpin everything we do and helping to foster and cultivate a positive culture of involvement and engagement across our work.

# Our vision

To have a best-practice approach to involvement and engagement, to improve the impact of our guidance and ensure the best care for people and communities.

# Our 5 core areas of focus

### Impactful involvement and engagement: involve the right people, at the right time, in the right way

There is no one-size-fits-all solution to involving and engaging people and communities. Our approach will be meaningful, appropriate and targeted on a case-by-case basis. This considered approach will ensure we maximise the input and impact of the people and communities contributing to our work.

### Tailored approaches: tailor the way in which people and our communities can engage with NICE

We will break down barriers that restrict engagement with NICE, such as complex committee structures or heavily bureaucratic processes. A tailored approach to involvement and engagement will remove barriers that alienate or discourage involvement. We will seek out more diverse experiences from people from wider communities and ensure we listen and learn.

### An innovative culture: test with, and learn from, new and innovative ways to work alongside people and communities

Established ways of working aren’t always the most effective. We will help everyone feel safe to speak up, to disagree openly and test innovative ways to involve and engage people and communities. We will learn from feedback and use this to influence developments in our methods and processes. This will ensure involvement and engagement remains meaningful and is informed by feedback, best practice and the health and care environment.

### Productive partnerships: transform our approach and ways of working with people and communities

The expertise of people and communities is vital for us to realise our vision. We will build on our established relationships and work with partners, particularly those who can help us work with those who often excluded or marginalised, to ensure their involvement and engagement with NICE increases the impact of our guidance.

### Focus on people first: embed an ethos of curiosity for involvement and engagement across NICE

Aligned to NICE values, we will nurture an ethos of curiosity for championing and seeking out involvement and engagement opportunities. Actively seeking out and understanding what matters to people and communities and how and where our work has impact. This commitment will be led by our Executive Team and Board and adopted by everyone.

# Our 12 principles

These principles will underpin everything we do:

1. Our involvement and engagement is impactful, appropriate and targeted on a case-by-case basis to maximise the impact on our work.
2. We will collaborate effectively with partners to shape and amplify the impact of NICE’s work.
3. We will be clear, open and honest about where we can act.
4. We will help everyone feel safe to speak up, to disagree openly, test new approaches and learn from them.
5. Our involvement and engagement activity will be underpinned by a fair and transparent payment policy.
6. We will use the appropriate terminology throughout all our engagement.
7. We will more effectively and consistently listen, use and re-use the insight NICE gets from people and communities to maximise impact and influence.
8. Engagement with people and communities is valued by NICE and has visible commitment from the Board and executive team.
9. Our work will be evidence-informed and aligned with best practice.
10. We will remove barriers that alienate or discourage involvement, especially from traditionally marginalised, excluded or underrepresented groups and build trust.
11. We will create the conditions, culture and processes for staff to embed and value impactful people and community involvement.
12. We will try new ways of working, learn and adapt together, valuing people’s diverse skills.

# How will we know our strategy has been successful?

Ultimately, this strategy is about developing and delivering a best-practice approach to involvement and engagement, to increase the impact of our guidance and ensure we get the best care for people and communities.

Over the next 3 years we will measure, monitor and share our progress in delivering this vision and its aims. We have defined how we will measure success and will set annual targets to ensure we are making progress.

In addition, we will test that we are on track by seeking feedback from the people, communities and partners we engage with, continually learning and adapting.

To have a best-practice approach to involvement and engagement, to improve the impact of our guidance and ensure the best care for people and communities.

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| Core Areas of Focus | Aims | Measuring success |
| Impactful involvement & engagement: involve the right people, at the right time, in the right way | Our involvement and engagement approach will be meaningful, appropriate and targeted on a case-by-case basis to maximise the input and impact of the people and communities contributing to our work. | * Improved uptake in guidance measures, in defined areas, which matter most to people and our communities.
* Increased rating and feedback on experience and impact from people & communities involved in guidance development.
* Involvement and engagement activity is underpinned by a fair and transparent payment policy.
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| Tailored approaches: tailor the way in which people and our communities can engage with NICE | A tailored approach to involvement and engagement will remove barriers that alienate or discourage involvement. We will seek out more diverse experiences from people from wider communities and ensure we listen and learn. | * Annual improvements in our reputational research survey results from the voluntary and community sector, across all domains.
* Increased participation from traditionally marginalised or underrepresented groups, including carers, advocates or representatives.
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| An innovative culture: test with, and learn from, new and innovative ways to work alongside people and communities | We will help everyone feel safe to speak up and test innovative ways to involve and engage people and communities meaningfully, informed by feedback, best practice and the health and care environment.  | * All new prioritised guidance will include a tailored approach, to achieve impactful involvement and engagement
* Updates to guidance development methods will specifically define tailored options for impactful involvement and engagement.
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| Productive partnerships: transform our approach and ways of working with people and communities | Develop productive partnerships with the voluntary and community sector and people groups to deliver greater impact to people and communities through increased uptake of guidance. | * Increased number of new partnerships formed with voluntary and community sector organisations to increase the uptake and impact of NICE guidance.
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| Focus on people first: embed an ethos of curiosity for involvement and engagement across NICE | Demonstrate visible Board commitment and develop involvement and engagement champions who will nurture an ethos of curiosity for championing and seeking out involvement and engagement opportunities with the people we serve.  | * Board will have a designated non-executive director with specific responsibility for people and community involvement and engagement.
* The proportion of NICE staff trained as involvement and engagement champions.
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# How will people and communities know our strategy is working for them?

While it is important to be able measure progress, it’s also essential that we define how delivery of a successful strategy will feel different for the people, communities and partners who work with us over the next 3 years. We retain our commitment to inclusivity, transparency, and active participation in healthcare decision-making. In working together, they will:

* Clearly see the influence and impact of their insight in our guidance.
* Have their insight sought and valued.
* Be working in partnership with NICE and co-producing work to amplify impact.
* See improved uptake of guidance in areas most affected by health inequalities.
* Have a positive experience of working with NICE.
* Work alongside NICE in a way that works for them.
* Feel actively involved in testing with, and learning from, new and innovative ways to work together.

# Developing the plan and reporting progress

We have set a timeframe of 3 years from April 2024 to deliver this strategy. Our success will be dependent upon everyone understanding their part in helping to deliver our vision, aims and measures. To this end, we must ensure that people within NICE, partners and the people and communities we work alongside are clear how their role, responsibilities and behaviours support our collective vision.

We will translate our strategy into specific annual deliverables, targets and activities to be taken forward, in partnership with the people, communities and partners we work alongside.

Development and delivery of the strategy will be overseen by our involvement and engagement steering groups, to ensure we are on track and delivering our aims. People and community involvement and engagement activity will be spotlighted through our programme board reporting and associated measures reported regularly to the Board. An annual review of engagement and involvement activity will be reported to the Board and will feed into the NICE annual report.

# Thank you

To all the people who were involved in the co-development of this strategy.

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# Next steps

NICE will widely consult on the draft strategy from Monday 19 February to Wednesday 27 March 2024, to inform a final draft.

The final draft version of the strategy will be presented to the NICE Board on Wednesday 15 May.

We will publish the strategy in the summer 2024 and outline how we will take forward our work together over the next 3 years.

We will translate our strategy into specific annual deliverables, targets and activities to be taken forward, in partnership with the people, communities and partners we work alongside.

Development and delivery of the strategy will be overseen by our involvement and engagement steering groups.