

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CARE EXCELLENCE

Medical technologies evaluation programme

Equality impact assessment: Topic selection and scoping

GID-HTE10021 Digital technologies for managing low back pain: early value 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?

Several potential equality issues have been identified in line with equality considerations for this class of technologies. Key issues include:

- Digital technologies for managing low back pain (LBP) are delivered through a mobile phone, tablet or a computer. People will need regular access to a device with internet access to use these technologies. Additional support and resources may therefore be needed for people who are unfamiliar with digital technologies or who do not have access to smart devices or the internet.
- People with visual or cognitive impairment, problems with manual dexterity, a learning disability or who are unable to read or understand health-related information (including people who cannot read English) may need additional support to use the technologies. Some people would benefit from digital technologies for managing LBP in languages other than English. Developers should consider how to translate these interventions or provide additional support as needed.
- People's ethnic, religious and cultural background may affect their views of digital technologies for managing LBP. People have the right to make informed decisions about their care, including the use of digital technologies. Healthcare professionals should discuss the language and cultural content of the technologies with patients.

LBP increases in prevalence with age and adults aged 45 years and over have an increased risk of having chronic LBP. Musculoskeletal pain disproportionately affects people from some ethnic minority backgrounds.

Age, disability, race and religion or belief are 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. Access to primary and community care for managing LBP may not be improved for those who are unable to engage with a digital intervention due to a lack of accessibility, unavailability of internet connection or lack of experience with computers or smartphones.

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

No.

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: Anastasia Chalkidou

Date: 14/07/2023