

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CARE EXCELLENCE

NICE guidelines

Equality impact assessment

Caesarean birth

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

3.0 Guideline development: before consultation (to be completed by the Developer before consultation on the draft guideline)

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

No scoping phase was carried out for this update.

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?

This update was carried out in response to stakeholder concerns that women were being required to switch to an alternative obstetric unit to obtain a maternal request caesarean birth, if the healthcare team or obstetrician at their original unit declined to provide this. This requirement could lead to women having to travel to a unit further away and the impact of this would be felt most acutely by:

- women with disabilities who find it difficult to travel
- women from lower socioeconomic groups where the increased travel costs are a concern
- young mothers who may not feel confident enough to transfer to another unit
- women who do not speak English as a first language, or those from groups such

as migrants or refugees who may not be familiar with navigating the healthcare system and who therefore may have more difficulty changing their provider or travelling to another unit.

In order to address these potential issues, the committee has amended the recommendation to state that maternal request caesarean births must be offered by every obstetric unit.

3.3 Have the Committee's considerations of equality issues been described in the guideline for consultation, and, if so, where?

The rationale for the amendment to this recommendation includes an explanation of why the committee made this change.

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?

The recommendations have been amended to reduce potential difficulty with access for selected groups.

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, there is not potential for the preliminary recommendations to have an adverse impact on people with disabilities because of something that is a consequence of the disability?

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 box 3.4, or otherwise fulfil NICE's obligation to advance equality?

Not applicable – no barriers identified in box 3.4

Completed by Developer: Hilary Eadon

Date: 28 March 2023

Approved by NICE quality assurance lead: Christine Carson

Date: 14 April 2023