

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CARE EXCELLENCE

NICE guidelines

Equality impact assessment

Drug misuse prevention: targeted interventions

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

1.0 Scope: before consultation (To be completed by the developer and submitted with the draft scope for consultation)

1.1 Have any potential equality issues been identified during the development of the draft scope, before consultation, and, if so, what are they?

(Please specify if the issue has been highlighted by a stakeholder)

1. The scope focuses on populations who are most likely to start using drugs, who are already experimenting drugs, or who use drugs occasionally.
2. The groups specifically covered are children, young people and adults who are most likely to start using drugs, who are already experimenting drugs, or who use drugs occasionally. This includes:
 - people who frequently go to nightclubs or festivals
 - men who have sex with men
 - people who may be more vulnerable:
 - a) people with mental health problems
 - b) people involved in commercial sex work or who are being sexually exploited
 - c) children and young people who are not in education or training, including school excludees and truants

d) children and young people whose parents use drugs

e) children and young people who are looked after

3. It will not cover:

- People who already dependent on drugs or who use drugs regularly and excessively
- People who are in prison or young offender institutions
- People who are part of on-going drug treatment and recovery

4. A focus on those ‘who are more vulnerable’ potentially means that those are less vulnerable may not be considered fully in the guideline. This potentially raises a number of equality issues in groups considered less vulnerable across the protected characteristics. The focus of the guidance is on settings and communities and thus does not set out to ‘discriminate’ on the basis of the protected characteristics. The scope is not suggesting that the risk of drug misuse is not present in these less vulnerable communities/populations. The scope has focused on those are more vulnerable based on the evidences reported by other publications, for example “Drug Misuse: Finding from the 2012 to 2013 Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW, 2014)” and “New psychoactive substances in England: a review of the evidence (Home Office, 2014)”

5. Excluding “People who are in prison or young offender institutions” can potentially raise a number of equality issues among inmate population. However, prisoners in United Kingdom are usually already on a prevention/rehab scheme or system or have access to such a scheme during their custody. NICE is currently producing guidance on the [mental health of adults in contact with the criminal justice system](#).

6. The key activities outlined in the scope include increasing awareness. Within population categorised as more vulnerable there may be potential equality issues regarding the way in which this is done. Consideration needs to be given to the format of information delivery for example those with visual impairments or those for whom English is not their first language. This should be considered in the guidance development process

7. There is also a potential equality issue regarding access to interventions for transient communities such as homeless people and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. The scope and subsequent guideline development process should be aware of this and make provision to consider this in the guidance development process

8. The guideline is limited to targeted interventions and will not consider universal interventions to prevent drug use. These interventions will need to be considered at a future time.

1.2 What is the preliminary view on the extent to which these potential equality issues need addressing by the Committee? For example, if population groups, treatments or settings are excluded from the scope, are these exclusions justified – that is, are the reasons legitimate and the exclusion proportionate?

The committee will need to consider the above issues particularly in terms of the evidence base and thinking about settings for the delivery of interventions to reflect some protected characteristics.

The focus of the scope on those who are more vulnerable is justified.

The exclusion of “people who are already dependent on drugs or who use drugs regularly and excessively” and of “people who are part of on-going drug treatment and recovery” is justified by the fact that NICE has produced several guidelines relevant to those who are regular or habitual users.

The exclusion of prisoners is justified given the existing prevention programmes currently universally offered to inmates in England.

Completed by Intern – Emanuele Mortara

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Approved by NICE

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