

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND
CARE EXCELLENCE**

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE DIRECTORATE

QUALITY STANDARDS

Quality standard topic: Falls

Output: Equality analysis form – Meeting 1

Introduction

As outlined in the [Quality Standards process guide](http://www.nice.org.uk) (available from www.nice.org.uk), NICE has a duty to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between people from different groups. The purpose of this form is to document the consideration of equality issues in each stage of the development process before reaching the final output that will be approved by the NICE Guidance Executive. This equality analysis is designed to support compliance with NICE's obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998.

Table 1 lists the equality characteristics and other equality factors NICE needs to consider, i.e. not just population groups sharing the 'protected characteristics' defined in the Equality Act but also those affected by health inequalities associated with socioeconomic factors or other forms of disadvantage. The table does not attempt to provide further interpretation of the protected characteristics. This is because it is likely to be simpler, and more efficient, to use the evidence underpinning the quality standard to define population groups within the broad protected characteristic categories rather than to start with possibly unsuitable checklists created for other purposes, such as social surveys or HR monitoring tools.

The form should be used to:

- confirm that equality issues have been considered and identify any relevant to the topic
- ensure that the quality standards outputs do not discriminate against any of the equality groups
- highlight planned action relevant to equality
- highlight areas where quality standards may advance equality of opportunity.

This form is completed by the NICE quality standards internal team at each stage within the development process:

- Topic overview (to elicit additional comments as part of active stakeholder engagement)
- Quality Standards Advisory Committee – meeting 1
- Quality Standards Advisory Committee – meeting 2

Table 1

Protected characteristics
Age
Disability
Gender reassignment
Pregnancy and maternity
Race
Religion or belief
Sex
Sexual orientation
Other characteristics
Socio-economic status Depending on policy or other context, this may cover factors such as social exclusion and deprivation associated with geographical areas or inequalities or variations associated with other geographical distinctions (e.g. the North/South divide, urban versus rural).
Marital status (including civil partnership)

Other categories

Other groups in the population experience poor health because of circumstances often affected by, but going beyond, sharing a protected characteristic or socioeconomic status. Whether such groups are identifiable depends on the guidance topic and the evidence. The following are examples of groups covered in NICE guidance:

- Refugees and asylum seekers
- Migrant workers
- Looked after children
- Homeless people.

Quality standards equality analysis

Stage: Meeting 1

Topic: Falls

1. Have any equality issues impacting upon equality groups been identified during this stage of the development process?

- Please state briefly any relevant equality issues identified and the plans to tackle them during development.

Risk factors for falls include: age; gender and disability. People aged 80 years and over are at increased risk with 50% of people in this group falling at least once a year (compared with 30% of people aged 65 years and over). Women are more likely to fall than men. Disabilities such as cognitive and visual impairment, neurological conditions and learning disabilities also increase the risk of falling.

All equalities issues identified above at the topic overview stage were considered by the committee. All statements in the draft quality standard consider these groups and where individual statements are particularly relevant to these groups they are highlighted in the equality and diversity considerations sections.

No further equalities issues have been identified at this stage.

2. Have relevant bodies and stakeholders been consulted, including those with a specific interest in equalities?

- Have comments highlighting potential for discrimination or advancing equality been considered?

Standing members for Quality Standards Advisory Committees (QSACs) have been recruited by open advert with relevant bodies and stakeholders given the opportunity to apply. In addition to these standing committee members, specialist committee members from a range of professional and lay backgrounds relevant to the assessment and prevention of falls in older people were recruited.

The first stage of the process gained comments from stakeholders on the key quality improvement areas which were considered by the QSAC.

This is the second stage of the process which will look to elicit comments from stakeholders on the draft quality standard at consultation.

3. Have any population groups, treatments or settings been excluded from coverage by the quality standard at this stage in the process? Are these exclusions legal and justified?

- Are the reasons for justifying any exclusion legitimate?

The quality standard covers the assessment and prevention of falls in people aged 65 years and over. This is consistent with the scope of the clinical guideline that is used as the primary evidence source. The epidemiology data presented in the guideline scope suggests that using the age of 65 as a cut off is a proportionate means of directing resources for falls prevention, because this is the group most at risk.

For the assessment and prevention of falls during a hospital stay the quality standard

will also cover people aged 50 to 64 years who are admitted to hospital and are judged by a clinician to be at higher risk of falling because of an underlying condition. This is consistent with the scope of the clinical guideline that is used as the primary evidence source.

4. If applicable, do any of the quality statements make it impossible or unreasonably difficult in practice for a specific group to access a service or element of a service?

- Does access to a service or element of a service depend on membership of a specific group?
- Does a service or element of the service discriminate unlawfully against a group?
- Do people with disabilities find it impossible or unreasonably difficult to receive a service or element of a service?

Statement 4 of the quality standard highlights the issue that healthcare professionals should consider that age and socioeconomic status may influence the willingness of service users to accept help with home hazards.

5. If applicable, does the quality standard advance equality?

- Please state if the quality standard, including statements, measures and indicators, as described will advance equality of opportunity, for example by making access more likely for certain groups, by tailoring the service to certain groups, or by making reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities?

We believe this quality standard will advance equality.