

## *National Institute for Clinical Excellence*

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### **PRESS RELEASE**

#### **NICE and endometrial ablation**

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence is carrying out an appraisal of endometrial ablation for the treatment of heavy menstrual bleeding (menorrhagia). **NICE has not issued any guidance to the NHS on this topic, nor will it do so before August 2003.**

August is the earliest guidance could be available as the guidance is still in development. The next step in the process is that consultees will be sent a final appraisal determination, which will also be available on the Institute's web site next week. Consultees have 3 weeks to consider if they wish to appeal against this document.

The story in today's Daily Mail refers to microwave endometrial ablation treatment and quotes the manufacturer of this technology - Microsulis. This is only one of the technologies the Institute is appraising the other technology is fluid-filled thermal balloon endometrial ablation.

The most recent publication from the Institute on this topic was a [consultation document](#) issued in April 2003. This document (an ACD - Appraisal Consultation Document) outlines the independent Appraisal Committee's provisional recommendations and is clear that the contents may change following consultation.

The consultation document does not suggest that microwave endometrial ablation should replace hysterectomy per se. It reflects the committee's thinking at that stage of the appraisal that this technology might be used alongside other surgical treatments for menorrhagia, including hysterectomy.

The consultation document makes it clear that the choice of surgical treatment should be made jointly by the woman and the clinician responsible for her treatment. The discussion should take into account the relative benefits of the all the available options and the adverse events associated with them, as well as the clinical condition and preferences of the woman.

## **Ends**

For more information call Lucy Betterton on 020 7067 5903 and 07747 865 562

## **Notes to Editors**

### **About NICE**

1. NICE is part of the NHS. It is the independent organisation responsible for providing national guidance on treatments and care for those using the NHS in England and Wales. Its guidance is for healthcare professionals and patients and their carers to help them make decisions about treatment and healthcare. For further information about NICE you can visit [www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk).
2. NICE produces guidance in three areas of health:
  - the use of new and existing medicines and treatments within the NHS in England and Wales – technology appraisals
  - the appropriate treatment and care of patients with specific diseases and conditions within the NHS in England and Wales – clinical guidelines.
  - whether interventional procedures used for diagnosis or treatment are safe enough and work well enough for routine use– interventional procedures.

NICE also funds three enquiries that undertake research into the way patients are treated to identify ways of improving the quality of care (the investigations are known as confidential enquiries).

3. NICE guidance and recommendations are prepared by independent groups that include professionals working in the NHS and people who are familiar with the issues affecting patients and carers.

### **About technology appraisals**

4. Technology appraisals are recommendations on the use of new and existing medicines and treatments within the NHS in England and Wales, such as:
  - medicines (for example, drugs)
  - medical devices (for example, hearing aids or inhalers)
  - diagnostic techniques (tests used to identify diseases)
  - surgical procedures (for example, repairing hernias)
  - health promotion activities (for example, patient education models for diabetes).
5. Our technology appraisal recommendations are prepared by an independent Committee, who include healthcare professionals working in the NHS and people who are familiar with the issues affecting patients and carers. The Committee considers the evidence on the clinical and cost effectiveness of the technology – this includes hearing the views of, and evidence from, clinical health professionals, experts and patients.
6. NHS organisations in England and Wales have to make the resources and facilities available to enable NICE guidance to be implemented. In January 2002 the Government

announced a legal obligation for the NHS to provide funding for treatments and drugs recommended by NICE as a part of its technology appraisals work programme