

From the Acting Chief Medical Officer  
**Dr Elizabeth Mitchell**



Department of  
**Health, Social Services  
and Public Safety**

[www.dhsspsni.gov.uk](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk)

**Circular HSC (SQSD) (NICE) 30/09 TA 152**

AN ROINN

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta  
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

MÁNNYSTRIE O

**Poustie, Resydènter Heisin  
an Fowk Siccar**

**Subject: Technology Appraisal No 152 –  
Coronary Artery Disease – Drug Eluting Stents**

**Circular Reference: HSC (SQSD) (NICE) 30/2009**

**Date of Issue: 25 June 2009**

**For action by:**

Chief Executives of HSC Board – **for distribution to:**

- Directors of Public Health
- Directors of Nursing
- Directors of Pharmaceutical Services
- Directors of Primary Care – for cascade to prescribing and GP Advisors

Chief Executives of HSC Trusts – **for distribution to:**

- Medical Directors – for cascade to relevant staff
- Directors of Nursing – for cascade to relevant staff
- Directors of Pharmaceutical Services – for cascade to relevant staff

HSC Clinical and Social Governance Leads

Chief Executives of HSC Special Agencies and NDPBs

**For Information to:**

- Chair of HSC Board
- Chief Executive Public Health Agency
- Director of Public Health, Public Health Agency
- Director of Nursing, Public Health Agency
- Chairs of HSC Trusts
- Chief Executive, Regulation & Quality Improvement Authority
- Chief Officers HSC Councils
- Chief Executive/Postgraduate Dean, NIMDTA
- Chief Executive, NICPPET
- Chief Executive, NIPEC
- Chief Executive, RMSC

**Summary of Contents:**

Drug-eluting stents are recommended for use in percutaneous coronary intervention for the treatment of coronary artery disease, within their instructions for use, only if:

- the target artery to be treated has less than a 3-mm calibre or the lesion is longer than 15 mm, and
- the price difference between drug-eluting stents and bare-metal stents is no more than £300

**Enquiries:**

Any enquiries about the content of this Circular should be addressed to:

Standards & Guidelines Unit  
DHSSPS  
Room D1.4  
Castle Buildings  
Stormont  
BELFAST  
BT4 3SQ

[SGU-NICEGuidance@dhsspsni.gov.uk](mailto:SGU-NICEGuidance@dhsspsni.gov.uk)

**Related documents:**

See bullet point 5 below

**Superseded documents**

This guidance replaces sections 1.2-1.4 of technology appraisal guidance 71 issued by NICE in October 2003. Available for download at: <http://guidance.nice.org.uk/TA71>

**Status of Contents:**

Action

**Implementation:**

Within 3 months

**Additional copies:**

Available to download from  
<http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/phealth/sqs/sqsd-guidance.htm>

**Dear Colleagues**

## **Technology Appraisal No 152 – Coronary Artery Disease – Drug Eluting Stents**

Drug-eluting stents are recommended as a possible treatment for people with coronary artery disease only if:

- the artery to be treated is less than 3 mm in diameter or the affected section of the artery is longer than 15 mm, and
- the additional cost of the drug-eluting stents over bare-metal stents is £300 or less.

This guidance replaces sections 1.2-1.4 of technology appraisal guidance 71 issued by NICE in October 2003. Available for download at: <http://guidance.nice.org.uk/TA71>

DHSSPS advises that this guidance is valid for Northern Ireland and endorses it for implementation in HSC.

The full NICE technology appraisal is available for download at:

<http://www.nice.org.uk/Guidance/TA152>

The HSC sector also should note that;

1. The Department expects the HSC sector to put plans in place within 3 months of this e;mail alert, to facilitate implementation of this guidance. This includes the negotiation of cost with manufacturers of stents and could potentially delay the implementation of the cost constraint in NI. A favourable result from negotiations should be achieved as speedily as possible.
2. This advice does not override or replace the individual responsibility of health professionals to make appropriate decisions in the circumstances of their individual patients, in consultation with the patient and/or guardian or carer. This would, for example, include situations where individual patients have other conditions or complications that need to be taken into account in determining whether the NICE guidance is fully appropriate in their case.
3. NICE has developed tools to help organisations implement this guidance. These are available at <http://www.nice.org.uk/Guidance/TA152> and include costing tools, implementation advice and audit criteria to monitor local practice.
4. This guidance will be considered for review by NICE in April 2009.
5. NICE has published related guidance as follows:

Published by NICE before July 2006

Guidance on the use of coronary artery stents. NICE technology appraisal guidance 71 (2003). Available for download at : [www.nice.org.uk/TA071](http://www.nice.org.uk/TA071)

Clopidogrel in the treatment of non-ST-segment-elevation acute coronary syndrome. NICE technology appraisal guidance 80 (2004). Available for download at: [www.nice.org.uk/TA080](http://www.nice.org.uk/TA080)

All NICE guidance endorsed by the Department to date can be accessed on the DHSSPS website at:

[Safety, Quality and Standards | NICE Guidance | DHSSPS\(NI\)](#)

Circular HSS (PPMD) (NICE) 01/06 issued on 30 June 2006 provides further information on the Northern Ireland process for reviewing NICE guidance and further details on the local status of the Institute's guidance. This circular can be accessed at:  
[http://dhsspsni.gov.uk/nice\\_guidance\\_01-06.pdf](http://dhsspsni.gov.uk/nice_guidance_01-06.pdf)

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Elizabeth Mitchell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**DR ELIZABETH MITCHELL**  
**Acting Chief Medical Officer**