

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) 31/09 TA 157**

AN ROINN

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta  
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

MÁNNYSTRIE O

**Poustie, Resydënter Heisin  
an Fowk Siccar**

**Subject: Technology Appraisal No 157 –  
Venous Thromboembolism – Dabigatran**  
(Dabigatran Etxilate for the Prevention of Venous  
Thromboembolism after Hip or Knee Replacement  
Surgery in Adults)

**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:**

Dabigatran etexilate, within its marketing authorisation, is  
recommended as an option for the primary prevention of venous  
thromboembolic events in adults who have undergone elective total  
hip replacement surgery or elective total knee replacement surgery.

**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)

**Circular Reference: HSC (SQSD) (NICE) 31/2009**

**Date of Issue: 25 June 2009**

**Related documents:**

See bullet points 5 and 6 below

**Superseded documents**

**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 157 – Venous Thromboembolism – Dabigatran**

Dabigatran etexilate is recommended as a possible treatment to reduce the risk of venous thromboembolism in adults who have surgery to replace their hip or knee joint.

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/TA157>

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.
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/TA157> and include costing tools, implementation advice and audit criteria to monitor local practice.
4. This guidance will be considered for review by NICE in June 2011.
5. NICE has published related guidance as follows:

Venous thromboembolism: reducing the risk of venous thromboembolism (deep vein thrombosis and pulmonary embolism) in inpatients undergoing surgery. NICE clinical guideline 46 (2007). Available for download at: [www.nice.org.uk/CG046](http://www.nice.org.uk/CG046)

6. NICE is in the process of developing the following related guidance:

Reducing the risk of venous thromboembolism (deep vein thrombosis and pulmonary embolism) in patients admitted to hospital. NICE clinical guideline (publication expected September 2009).

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)

*Elizabeth Mitchell*

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