

From the Acting Chief Medical Officer
Dr Paddy Woods



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

www.dhsspsni.gov.uk

Circular HSC (SQSD) (NICE) 36/09 CG 70

AN ROINN

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

MÁNNYSTRIE O

**Poustie, Resydënter Heisin
an Fowk Siccar**

**Subject: Clinical Guideline No 70 – Induction
of Labour**

Circular Reference: HSC (SQSD) (NICE) 36/2009

Date of Issue: 10 July 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

General Practitioners

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:

This update NICE clinical guideline reviews the policy and methods of induction, and the care of women being offered and having induction.

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

Related documents:

See bullet point 5 below

Superseded documents

This guidance updates and replaces NICE inherited clinical guideline D, (published in June 2001); for download at : <http://www.nice.org.uk/CGD> *Guideline D*)

Status of Contents:

Action

Implementation:

Additional copies:

Available to download from

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



Dear Colleagues

Clinical Guideline No 70 – Induction of Labour

This guidance updates and replaces NICE inherited clinical guideline D, (published in June 2001); for download at : <http://www.nice.org.uk/CGD> *Guideline D*) was in need of updating because some of its content has been superseded by changes in both the evidence base and clinical practice.

The clinical requirement for induction of labour arises from circumstances in which it is believed that the outcome of the pregnancy will be better if it is artificially interrupted rather than being left to follow its natural course. Induction of labour is perhaps unique in medicine because it seeks to advance a process which in the natural course of events is inevitable unless the pregnancy is terminated by caesarean section or the mother dies before giving birth.

Induced labour has an impact on the birth experience of women. It may be less efficient and is generally more painful than spontaneous labour. It is also more likely to require epidural analgesia and assisted birth. Induction of labour is a relatively common procedure. In 2004–05, 19.8% of all deliveries in the UK were induced. This includes induction for all medical reasons. Where labour was induced by drugs, whether or not surgical induction was also attempted, fewer than two-thirds of women gave birth without further intervention, with about 15% having instrumental births and 22% having emergency caesarean sections.²

Induction of labour can place more strain on labour wards than spontaneous labour. Traditionally, induction is undertaken during daytime when labour wards are often already busy. The policy of induction, including indications, methods and care to be offered, thus needs to be reviewed.

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

The full NICE clinical guideline is available for download at:
<http://guidance.nice.org.uk/CG70>

The HSC sector also should note that;

1. The Department expects the HSC sector to take account of this guidance in the planning and delivery of services to women who are pregnant.
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. This guidance is expected to be considered for review by NICE in July 2011.
4. NICE has developed tools to help organisations implement this guidance. These are available at <http://guidance.nice.org.uk/CG70> and include costing tools, implementation advice and audit criteria to monitor local practice.
5. NICE has published related guidance as follows:

Antenatal care: routine care for the healthy pregnant woman. NICE clinical guideline 62 (2008). Available for download at www.nice.org.uk/CG062

Intrapartum care: care of healthy women and their babies during childbirth. NICE clinical guideline 55 (2007). Available for download www.nice.org.uk/CG055

Routine postnatal care of women and their babies. NICE clinical guideline 37 (2006). Available for download at : www.nice.org.uk/CG037

Diabetes in pregnancy: management of diabetes and its complications from preconception to the postnatal period. NICE clinical guideline 63 (2008). Available for download at: www.nice.org.uk/CG063

Antenatal and postnatal mental health: clinical management and service guidance. NICE clinical guideline 45 (2007). Available for download at: www.nice.org.uk/CG045

Caesarean section. NICE clinical guideline 13 (2004). Available for download at: www.nice.org.uk/CG013

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



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