

From the Chief Medical Officer
Dr Michael McBride



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

www.dhsspsni.gov.uk

AN ROINN

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

MÁNNYSTRIE O

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Circular HSC (SQSD) (NICE) 60/08 CG 52

Chief Executives of HSS Boards – **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

Date: 22 October 2008

General Practitioners

HSC Clinical and Social Governance Leads

Chief Executives of HSC Special Agencies and NDPBs

For Information

Chairs of HSS Boards
Chairs of HSC Trusts
Chief Executive, Regulation & Quality Improvement Authority
Chief Officers HSC Councils
Chief Executive/Postgraduate Dean, NIMDTA
Chief Executive, NIPPET
Chief Executive, NIPEC
Chief Executive, RMSC

Dear Colleagues

NICE Clinical Guideline No 52 – Drug Misuse: Opioid Detoxification

NICE has produced two guidelines on drug misuse – ‘Drug misuse: psychosocial interventions’ (NICE clinical guideline 51) and ‘Drug misuse: opioid detoxification’ (NICE clinical guideline 52). They cover:

- the support and treatment people can expect to be offered if they have a problem with or are dependent on opioids, stimulants or cannabis
- how families and carers may be able to support a person with a drug problem and get help for themselves.

NICE clinical guideline 52 makes recommendations for the treatment of people who are undergoing detoxification for opioid dependence arising from the misuse of illicit drugs.

DHSSPS advises that this guidance is valid for Northern Ireland and endorses it as good practice guidance for the HSC sector.

The full clinical guideline is available for download at:

<http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/index.jsp?action=byID&o=11813>

The full clinical guideline on Drug Misuse: Psychosocial Interventions is available for download at:

<http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/index.jsp?action=byID&o=11812>

NICE has developed related Public Health Guidance on Substance Misuse (PHI 4), available for download at:

<http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/index.jsp?action=byID&o=11379>

The HSC sector also should note that;

1. The Department expects the HSC sector to take account of this guidance in their delivery of services to patients who are dependent on opioids, stimulants or cannabis;
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/index.jsp?action=byID&o=11813> and include costing tools, implementation advice and audit criteria to monitor local practice;
4. This guidance will be updated by NICE as required.

All NICE guidance endorsed by the Department to date can be accessed on the DHSSPS website at <http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/sqsd-guidance-nice-guidance>

Circular HSS (PPMD) (NICE) 01/006 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://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/nice_guidance_01-06.pdf



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