

Executive update to the Board

September 2025

Executive Summary

- This paper provides an update on NICE performance – including notable guidance to date, as well as strategic context shaping NICE delivery. **The Board is asked to note key context and review the attached Integrated Performance Review (IPR) report.**
- Since our last meeting, we have published several notable pieces of guidance, providing access to innovative treatments. Notable examples include:
 - ✓ In final draft guidance, we have approved the use of pembrolizumab for endometrial cancer. The approval marks **the first time immunotherapy has been combined with chemotherapy** as a first-line treatment for the whole group of patients with primary advanced or recurrent endometrial cancer.
 - ✓ In final draft guidance, we have recommended betula verrucosa – **the first under-the-tongue tablet** immunotherapy shown to build long-term tolerance to allergens. This treatment offers the potential for long-term rather than temporary symptom relief.
 - ✓ In draft guidance, we have **conditionally recommended six digital technologies** that can support cardiac rehabilitation for adults with cardiovascular disease.
 - ✓ Reflecting the most recent guideline, **we updated our quality standard for overweight and obesity management**, to recommend that people coming off obesity medication or finishing a weight management programme should be offered support to help keep the weight off and stay healthy long-term.
 - ✓ Millions of people could benefit from **earlier access to newer type 2 diabetes treatments** following recent draft updates to NICE's guideline. These updates demonstrate progress on work to drive better care and smarter NHS spending by re-evaluating priority clinical pathways as committed in the 10-Year Health Plan.
- Regarding our recent performance, **delivery against our priority goals is on track**. This includes work to improve the timeliness, quality, relevance, usability and impact of our guidance. For each of our priority projects to deliver these goals, overall milestones are on track to be delivered as planned (rated “green” or “complete”). In addition, three quarters of our key performance indicators (KPIs) are on track to meet or exceed the 2025/26 targets (rated “green”).
- Highlighted successes include a 14% improvement in medicines guidance timeliness compared to 24/25; and securing legal clearance of the NICE/MHRA aligned pathway, ready for the October launch. While there is further work required to improve timeliness of HealthTech guidance, we continue to see progress on the Rules Based Pathway. Stakeholder engagement is shaping the Whole Lifecycle Approach and funding variations, and procurement of a new knowledge platform is on track. Internally, the organisation is forecasting a breakeven financial position,, improving workforce diversity, and staff engagement.
- NICE continues to operate in a changing policy context. In August, the review of the Voluntary Scheme for Branded Medicines Pricing, Access and Growth (VPAG) concluded without agreement of changes to the current scheme. It is for government to set the medicines budget, while NICE plays a crucial role in ensuring that this budget is spent wisely for patients and taxpayers. We continually review our approach to this – our methodology – and look for areas where the evidence supports more flexibility. This approach means that NICE approved 80% of medicines on average over the last 20 years, with last year's figures standing at 91%. NICE will continue to take this approach, working collaboratively with the government, clinician, patients and industry to implement agreed medicines policy and ultimately to continue to deliver on our mission to help practitioners and commissioners get the best care to people, fast, while ensuring value for the taxpayer.

Access to innovative treatments: recent guidance highlights

Focussing on what matters most

- **Recommending groundbreaking new treatment for endometrial cancer** – In final draft guidance, NICE has approved the use of pembrolizumab for endometrial cancer. The approval marks the first time immunotherapy has been combined with chemotherapy as a first-line treatment for the whole group of patients with primary advanced or recurrent endometrial cancer. Around 2,100 people are set to benefit from this groundbreaking new treatment option.
- **Offering life-changing relief for thousands of people with birch tree pollen allergies** - In final draft guidance, NICE has recommended betula verrucosa – the first under-the-tongue tablet immunotherapy shown to build long-term tolerance to allergens. This treatment offers the potential for long-term rather than temporary symptom relief. This is expected to benefit up to 27,000 people in England.
- **Providing access to innovate treatment platforms for cardiac rehabilitation** - Six digital platforms have been conditionally recommended to support remote recovery for people with cardiovascular disease, addressing low uptake in traditional programmes. These platforms offer exercise, education, dietary advice, and psychological support, with potential to improve access for groups including women, ethnic minorities and those in deprived areas.

Learning from data and implementation

- **Updating our guidance to support people to stay healthy long-term** - Research shows that many people regain weight after stopping weight loss treatment if they don't get the right help, which can have negative effects on both mental and physical health. To close this gap, NICE recently updated its quality standard for overweight and obesity management, recommending ongoing support for people after obesity treatment to prevent weight gain. This includes monitoring for at least a year, behavioural advice, and access to tools like NHS Better Health.
- **Millions could benefit from updated type 2 diabetes guideline** - New draft guideline updates recommend SGLT-2 inhibitors as first-line treatment for all patients, not just those with heart disease. These updates address learnings from a 2024 NICE analysis, which revealed significant disparities in SGLT-2 inhibitor prescriptions for type 2 diabetes patients and demonstrate progress on our 10-Year Health Plan commitments, taking a whole lifecycle approach to updating guidance to improve access to effective treatments and drive smarter NHS spending.

Our performance highlights

Programme	Key messages
Timely and high quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14% improvement in medicines guidance timeliness compared to 24/25. • Further work required to improve timeliness of HealthTech guidance. • NICE/MHRA aligned pathway ready for Oct launch – legal clearance achieved.
Relevant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules-based pathway has shortlisted 6 potential topics for assessment at Prioritisation Board. A further 10 topics will be assessed in due course. Consultation on the health tech methods to support this programme will be discussed at this Board. • AI strategy advancing, with legal/IP reviews underway. • Stakeholder engagement progressing for whole lifecycle approach, with the Chronic Heart Failure guideline due to be updated in September.
Usable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement of knowledge platform on track; user research informing guideline clarity • Engagement plan developed to support transformation.
Impactful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct engagement with ICS regions and priority partners shaping NICE's offer. • Support tools in development for key conditions.
Brilliant organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakeven financial position forecast • Continuing to improve diversity of the workforce