

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence

Centre for Public Health

Review Decision: January 2014

Consideration of an update of the public health guidance on 'School-based interventions on alcohol' (PH7)

1 Background information

Guidance issue date: November 2007

Review date: March 2014

2 Process for updating guidance

Public health guidance is reviewed 3 years after publication to determine whether all or part of it should be updated.

The process for updating NICE public health guidance is as follows:

- NICE normally convenes an expert group to consider whether any new evidence or significant changes in policy and practice would be likely to lead to substantively different recommendations. The expert group consists of selected members (including co-optees) of the original committee that developed the guidance, the review team that produced the original evidence reviews, and representatives of relevant government departments and Public Health England.

- NICE consults with stakeholders on its proposal for updating the guidance (this review consultation document).
- NICE may amend its proposal, in light of feedback from stakeholder consultation.
- NICE determines where any guidance update fits within its work programme, alongside other priorities.

Permission was sought from NICE Guidance Executive in November 2013 to not convene an expert panel and instead go straight to a review proposal consultation indicating a proposed update to the guidance. The rationale for this was that it was anticipated that in 2010 when the guidance would normally have been reviewed for update that it would have been replaced by/integrated into the Public Health guidance, then in preparation on Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education focusing on sex and relationships and alcohol education (PSHE).

The draft [PSHE guidance](#) was consulted on in May 2010 and, following usual NICE processes, final guidance was developed ready for publication. In November 2010 the PSHE work was suspended at the request of ministers and therefore has not yet been published.

3 Consideration of the evidence and practice

During the development of the PSHE guidance the evidence base about school-based education and advice for alcohol was interrogated. The draft PSHE guidance gave more specific recommendations than those detailed in PH7. [Four reviews](#) were considered in the PSHE work of which 3 are directly relevant to PH7.

- Review 1: A review of the effectiveness and cost -effectiveness of personal, social and health education in primary schools focusing on sex and relationships and alcohol education for children and young people aged 5–11years

- Review 2: A review of the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of personal, social and health education in secondary schools and further education colleges focusing on sex and relationships and alcohol education for young people aged 11–19 years
- Review 4: Children and young people’s perspectives on school, family, and community-based personal, social and health education, in particular concerning alcohol, sexual health and relationships

These reviews would allow more detailed recommendations to be made in the School-based interventions on alcohol guidance.

Since the publication of PH7 there have been large changes in both the public health landscape and education system – for example the introduction of Academies and free schools, and a reduction in local authority governance of schools. This has led to a new context for implementation of any guidance targeting schools. Consequently some of the barriers and facilitators for implementation of the alcohol and schools guidance will also have changed. Additionally, the content and emphasis in alcohol messages should consider the Chief Medical Officer’s guidance (published since the original NICE guidance) which advises parents and children that an alcohol-free childhood is the healthiest and best option (Chief Medical Officer 2009).

In addition, the increasing use of social media has created an environment where the social norms around young people’s alcohol use may be skewed and which alcohol marketing can utilize to influence young people.

4 Stakeholder consultation

In December 2013, a proposal was made to stakeholders to update the original guidance. 15 stakeholder organisations responded to the consultation including: Department of Health, Public Health England, Royal College of Nursing and the Cochrane Drugs and Alcohol Group.

All stakeholders agreed with the proposal to fully update the guidance. Many stakeholders agreed that the public health and education landscapes have

change significantly since the guidance was published. Additionally stakeholders highlighted potential evidence sources that may be useful in any update of the guidance, including research indicating that school based education is young people's preferred source for alcohol education.

5 Equality and diversity considerations

There has been no evidence to indicate that the guidance does not comply with anti-discrimination and equalities legislation.

6 Conclusion

In conclusion, NICE are aware of new evidence that is likely to impact on the original recommendations; additionally the changes in the public health and education landscapes mean that the approach to the framing of the recommendations needs to take account of this new context.

7 Decision

The guidance will be fully updated.