

## Influencing health policy: Engaging with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)

This document summarises opportunities for researchers to influence NICE guidelines, with a view to changing practice and having an impact on health and wellbeing. It also signposts to internal support, including networking and funding opportunities.

### What does NICE do?

- **Produce useful and usable guidance for best practice in health and social care and encourage uptake of that guidance.** NICE have published over 300 guidelines on topics and the guidance is viewed over 10 million times a year. They also publish quality standards and indicators.
- **Providing rigorous, independent assessment of new health technologies.** NICE committees decide which medicines can be made available on the NHS.

### How can I engage?

- **Look at Recommendations for Research:** NICE publish Recommendations for Research alongside their guidelines. These recommendations cover evidence gaps that were identified during guideline development. National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) run a rolling funding call for research that addresses these gaps. Search in the top browser bar on the [NICE](#) landing website for a disease or condition, select a guideline and head to the 'recommendations for research' tab on the right-hand side.
- **Register as a stakeholder:** Allows you to stay up to date with active NICE areas of work and comment on particular guidelines or quality standards.
- **Comment on a consultation:** Comment on guidance before it is developed, during development or after publication via review consultations. All comments are considered by the committee and are published, along with responses.
- **Join a committee:** Committees meet over several months to develop and update specific guidance. Committees include professional members with specific technical, research and methodological experience, and members of the public with lived experience.

### Examples

- Lung cancer research informed a NICE guideline update, which now recommends less invasive endosonography based techniques as the first line test for lung cancer lymph node staging. This has led to approx. 70% fewer invasive staging operations and savings of £1.9M a year ([Rintoul et al](#))

- Predict Breast and Predict Prostate are evidence-based decision making tools which are recommended by NICE to help healthcare practitioners and cancer patients make informed decisions about their treatment, minimising unnecessary treatment ([Pharoah et al and Gnanapragasam et al](#))

#### Internal opportunities

- Engaging with [Centre for Science and Policy](#) (CSaP): CSaP works with researchers and policy professionals to foster networks based on mutual trust and understanding. Early- and mid-career researchers can contact CSaP to create a profile on CSaP's network to meet policy fellows. Researchers can also contact CsaP to plan various [policy engagement](#) activities and writing grant proposals.
- Internal impact and policy funding, such as the [Impact Acceleration Accounts](#) ([iaa@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:iaa@admin.cam.ac.uk)) and the [Policy Innovation Fund](#) ([kavya.neeba@csap.cam.ac.uk](mailto:kavya.neeba@csap.cam.ac.uk)), can support policy engagement and impact projects.
- [Cambridge University Science and Policy Exchange](#) (CUSPE): organisation run by and for early career researchers. Their main goal is to build stronger links between their members and government policymakers.
  - [Policy Challenges: Communication pieces](#) on various topics where science interacts with policy and vice versa.
  - [Events](#): Workshops, networking