From the Deputy Chief Medical Officer
Dr Paddy Woods

Circular HSC (SQSD) (NICE NG49) 50/16

Subject: NICE Clinical Guideline NG49 - Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD): assessment and management

Circular Reference: HSC (SQSD) (NICE NG49) 50/16

Date of Issue: 23 August 2016

Related documents:
HSC (SQSD) 3/13

Superseded documents
None

Summary of Contents: This clinical guideline covers how to identify the adults, young people and children with non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) who have advanced liver fibrosis and are most at risk of further complications. It outlines the lifestyle changes and pharmacological treatments that can manage NAFLD and advanced liver fibrosis.

Status of Contents:
Action

Implementation:
As per circular. Generally, Clinical Guidelines should be implemented within 12 months of endorsement.

Additional copies:

Enquiries:
Any enquiries about the content of this Circular should be addressed to:
Quality Regulation and Improvement Unit
DHSSPS
Room D1.4
Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
BELFAST
BT4 3SQ

SGU-NICEGuidance@health-ni.gov.uk
Dear Colleagues

NICE Clinical Guideline NG49 - Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD): assessment and management [https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng49](https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng49)

The Department has recently reviewed the above NICE guidance and has formally endorsed it as applicable in Northern Ireland.

In accordance with the process outlined in circular HSC (SQSD) 3/13, the following actions should be taken ([https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/dhssps/hsc-sqsd-3-13.pdf](https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/dhssps/hsc-sqsd-3-13.pdf))

1. HSC Board / PHA
   a. Identify a Professional Lead who will consider the commissioning implications of the Clinical Guideline and co-ordinate with any other relevant commissioning teams. This Lead will identify any areas where regional planning / investment / commissioning are required, or where there is material risk to safety or quality. These will then be actioned immediately through normal commissioning arrangements or through bespoke arrangements reflecting the nature of the issue / risk.
   b. Ensure that relevant guidance is sent to the appropriate Family Practitioners.
   c. Seek positive assurance from the HSC Trusts that the required initial actions have been undertaken within a 3 month period, and that the Guideline has been implemented within a further 9 months (unless otherwise notified by the HSC Trusts).
   d. Where significant investment/ commissioning needs cannot be met within the usual timeframe, agree appropriate arrangements with HSC Trusts. Report to DHSSPS as required at 6 monthly accountability meetings.

2. HSC Trusts
   a. Proceed with targeted dissemination, agree a clinical/management lead to coordinate implementation and consider what has to be done to achieve implementation using a risk based assessment and baseline review as appropriate to support planning. These initial actions should be undertaken within a three month period.
   b. Implement the Guideline within a further 9 months (apart from any elements where significant issues have been raised with the HSC Board/PHA).
   c. Provide positive assurances to the HSC Board that required initial actions have been taken within the 3 month planning period and that the Guideline has been implemented within a further 9 months, where appropriate.
   d. Where significant investment/ commissioning needs cannot be met within the usual timeframe, notify the HSC Board/PHA at the earliest opportunity through the bi-monthly director level meetings and agree appropriate arrangements with them to achieve implementation.

3. RQIA
   a. Disseminate the Guideline to the independent sector as appropriate.

4. HSC Special Agencies and NDPBs
   a. Take account of this Guideline in training and other developments as appropriate.
To inform the planning process, please find attached details from the Departmental review. You should consider and take account of other relevant Departmental policies and strategies in your planning, as well as any legislative / policy caveats identified in the course of the Departmental review.


Dr Paddy Woods
Deputy Chief Medical Officer
### Appendix 1

**Endorsed NICE guidance - Details from Departmental review**

| Reference Number | NICE Clinical Guideline - NG49  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD): assessment and management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summary of guidance</td>
<td>This clinical guideline covers how to identify the adults, young people and children with non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) who have advanced liver fibrosis and are most at risk of further complications. It outlines the lifestyle changes and pharmacological treatments that can manage NAFLD and advanced liver fibrosis.</td>
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<td>It includes recommendations on:</td>
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<td>• identifying groups at higher risk of NAFLD</td>
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<td>• diagnosing NAFLD in children and young people, and referring them to tertiary care</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• identifying adults, young people and children with advanced liver fibrosis</td>
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<td>• lifestyle modifications for NAFLD</td>
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<td>• pharmacological treatment for advanced liver fibrosis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Related strategically relevant DHSSPS/HSC policies</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td>Inter-Departmental interest</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legislative / policy caveats</td>
<td>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.</td>
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Where the guidance indicates that informed consent should be obtained and documented, the DoH guidance ‘Reference Guide to Consent for Examination, Treatment or Care (2003)’, which is available on the DoH website, gives advice on the law concerning consent to intervention. Available from: https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/consent-examination-treatment-or-care