



Department  
of Health



Public Health  
England

# Evidence based public health nursing and midwifery

A summary of NICE guidance to underpin  
practice

Public Health Outcome Domain Four – Healthcare,  
public health and preventing premature mortality

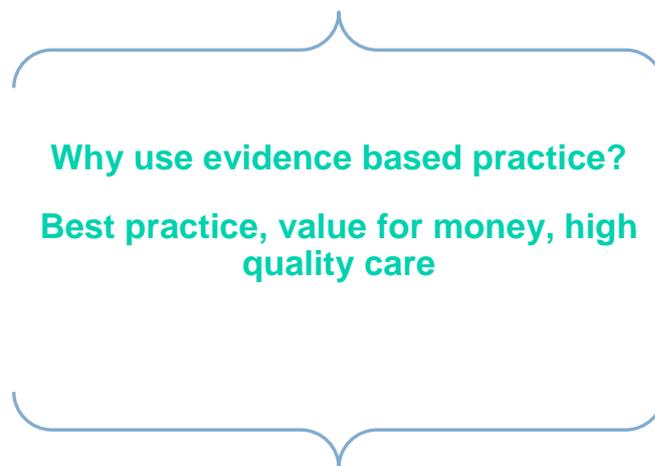
You may re-use the text of this document (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/)

© Crown copyright

# Evidence based public health nursing and midwifery

## A summary of NICE guidance to underpin nursing and midwifery practice to improve population health and wellbeing

*The challenges we face in terms of population health and well-being are huge. We know the impact of lifestyle factors on health, we understand increasingly the 'causes of the causes' and we are learning more about how to support people to make decisions and choices which are positive for their health. We need to now practice in ways which use this knowledge and our nursing and midwifery skills to make a personal and professional impact to improve health and well-being.*



## About this summary guide

Nurses and midwives have told us that they are keen to increase their range and reach in improving health and wellbeing and to do so need to have access to the evidence of what works.

This is a professional nursing and midwifery practice summary guide based on original work by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidance on public health. Information about NICE work on public health is shown on page 8.

We have worked with NICE to review and summarise the relevant guidance to support nurses and midwives in delivering evidence based interventions to improve health. This guide sets out this work for Public Health Outcome Domain Four – Healthcare, public health and preventing premature mortality.

Over the coming months we will work with the professions to develop the evidence base including web interface to access this summary guidance and support learning and development for 'health promoting practice'.

## What is evidence?

Evidence is one part of a process in demonstrating that interventions have been robustly tested and therefore that public health practice is supported by research or tested pathways.

A discussion of use of evidence for practice and validated sources of evidence is set out in our publication “The evidence base of the public health contribution of nurses and midwives”.

## Public Health Outcome Domain Three – Health protection

This document shows the summarised NICE guidance for improvements against wider factors that affect health and wellbeing, and health inequalities. It includes:

### **Preventing premature mortality through targeted programmes**

PH15 Identifying and supporting people most at risk of dying prematurely

PH25 Prevention of cardiovascular disease

PH32 Skin cancer prevention: information, resources and environmental changes

PH35 Preventing type 2 diabetes - population and community interventions

PH38 Preventing type 2 diabetes - risk identification and interventions for individuals at high risk

### **Miscellaneous**

PH3 Prevention of sexually transmitted infections and under 18 conceptions

PH16 Mental wellbeing and older people

## Preventing premature mortality through targeted programmes

### Relevance

Many of the guidelines in this group describe wider actions for organisations and commissioners however these guidelines have a direct impact on all nurses through every contact counts and more directly for nurses within public health and health promotion and disease specific environments.

### Implications for Leadership and practice

- Developing innovative solutions for engaging with disadvantaged communities and high-risk groups through flexible coordinated services
- Proactive identification of those at risk and initiating preventative strategies or signposting to appropriate partners
- Utilisation of routine contacts for opportunistic health promotion
- Consider how 'every contact counts' can have a positive influence on the reduction of risk factors through health promotion opportunities, engagement in wider community health & wellbeing and long term condition prevention at the population level
- All nurses championing prevention, this may require further training and development
- Health impact assessment should be undertaken and partnerships should be used to effect the health and well-being of people
- Public Health Nurses should ensure that local health promotion campaigns are targeted to need and delivered to effect
- Pathways should be clear and access to services clear for people identified as at risk

## Summary of recommendations related to public health nursing and midwifery

### Data and needs assessment

- Utilise public health data and information to target activities and behaviour change, understanding barriers and concerns, taking an evidence based approach and maintaining cost effective interventions
- Use national and local tools and data from public health data collection agencies, public health reports, the census, indices of deprivation and other sources of high quality data to identify communities at risk and target programmes
- Participate in and lead health impact assessment of plans and policy, tackling health inequalities

### Health & wellbeing

- Promote wellbeing of at risk communities and groups
- Use information campaigns, social media, health and wellbeing awareness to deliver preventative action tailoring messages to those most at risk
- Ensure the right start for children and young people helping them to develop healthy lifestyles
- Contribute to wider community and population prevention programmes working with local partners, employers and businesses

## **Developing interventions**

- Develop strategies and work with communities to identify local resources to promote healthy lifestyle behaviours including increased uptake of welfare benefits, sun awareness, mental wellbeing, healthy eating, weight management and increasing physical activity
- Primary care professionals must ensure that interventions target vulnerable and high risk groups
- Work should include targeted action in pre-identified areas or with specific populations
- Use local settings for interventions
- Ensure identification and assessment systems or initiatives are linked to effective services and interventions for individuals deemed to be at high risk
- Identify success criteria in the early stages of development to ensure interventions can be properly evaluated
- Develop, initiate, deliver and evaluate health promotion programmes to engage those at risk providing advice on risks which might be mitigated through personal actions
- Interventions should be evaluated appropriately
- Culturally sensitive interventions
- Ensure messages take account of cognitive ability

## **Engagement**

- Ensure user involvement through feedback from target groups on whether the services are accessible, appropriate and meeting their needs
- Identify and address barriers to participation
- Develop and deliver non-judgemental programmes to tackle social and psychological barriers to change tailored to people's needs, developing communication strategies that are sensitive to the target audience's language and information requirements
- Establish relationships between primary care practitioners and the community to understand how best to identify and help adults who are disadvantaged to adopt healthier lifestyles

## **Workforce**

- Ensure sufficient workforce and skills to deliver improvement (right people, right skills, right place) maintaining a high level of competence through PDP's, supervision and appraisal

## National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE)

NICE's role is to improve outcomes for people using the NHS and other public health and social care services by:

- Producing evidence-based guidance and advice for health, public health and social care practitioners
- Developing quality standards and performance metrics for those providing and commissioning health, public health and social care services
- Providing a range of information services for commissioners, practitioners and managers across the spectrum of health and social care

### Public Health Guidance

Public health guidance makes recommendations for populations and individuals on activities, policies and strategies that can help prevent disease or improve health. The guidance may focus on a particular topic (such as smoking), a particular population (such as schoolchildren) or a particular setting (such as the workplace). The NICE website [www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk) includes the following information:

- [Update on public health topics in development](#)
- [Published public health guidance](#)
- [Public health guidance in development](#)
- [How we develop NICE public health guidance](#)
- [Healthcare-associated infections quality improvement guide](#)
- [Full list of NICE guidance that makes public health recommendations.](#)