

# The RCP National Guideline Centre 10th anniversary

**Author:** Cameron Swift<sup>A</sup>

This year sees 10 years of close partnership between the Royal College of Physicians (RCP) and the National Guideline Centre (NGC). Hosted by the RCP, the NGC, formerly known as the National Clinical Guideline Centre, was formed in April 2009 following the merger of the National Collaborating Centres for Acute Care, Chronic Conditions, Nursing and Supportive and Primary Care, each based at individual royal colleges. It is one of the largest guideline development centres in the world, and, in addition to the RCP, has governance partnerships with the Royal College of Surgeons of England, Royal College of General Practitioners and the Royal College of Nursing.

The NGC is commissioned by the National Institute of Health and Care Excellence (NICE), which coincidentally this year has celebrated its 20th anniversary. Over this 20-year period NICE, through its commitment to methodologically rigorous, transparent evidence evaluation for healthcare interventions (including value and cost-effectiveness), has achieved international recognition as a global standard for robust and fair healthcare prioritisation.<sup>1</sup> In so doing, it has also contributed substantially to progress in UK population health. The NGC has been an integral part of this process over the past decade and the key deliverer of a substantial agenda of NICE guidance development.

The scale of work for the NGC in developing a guideline in accordance with NICE methodology is far greater than commonly recognised. It includes development of a guideline scope through work with stakeholder groups and a written consultation, open recruitment and subsequent collaboration (as technical experts) with a guideline committee of health and social care professionals, patient and carer representatives, and then drafting, consultation, finalisation and submission of final documents for NICE approval and NICE publication of the guideline. The NGC expert team comprises senior management, guideline leads, health economists, information specialists, research fellows, project managers, editorial assistants and administrators.

It has been a rewarding privilege to be involved with the NGC as a NICE guideline committee chairman and member, and also

in working with NGC staff and others to disseminate guidance in various formats in this and other journals. Over 70 guidelines have been published by the NGC over the decade. Full summaries of new guidelines are commonly published in *The BMJ*. Where relevant, general medicine focused abstracted elements of selected NGC guidelines and updates have been presented as part of a series of Concise Guidelines in *Clinical Medicine* – including acute kidney injury, care of the dying adult, Crohn's disease, epilepsies, hip fracture (multidisciplinary aspects), psoriasis, ST-elevation myocardial infarction, ulcerative colitis and venous thromboembolism prophylaxis. Other thematic reviews within *Clinical Medicine* have drawn extensively on NGC output. Online consumption of many of these items has endorsed the distinctive, direct, substantial value of the NGC's work to RCP journal readership.

The RCP's hosting of the NGC contributes substantially to its intrinsic aims (including quality improvement) and its external standing. The former and current chief operating officers (Ian Bullock, Norma O' Flynn) and their teams are to be warmly congratulated on its successful 10-year development. ■

**Cameron Swift**  
Concise guideline series editor

## Reference

- 1 Littlejohns P, Chalkidou K, Culyer AJ *et al*. National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, social values and healthcare priority setting. *J R Soc Med* 2019;112:173–9.

**Address for correspondence: Prof Cameron Swift, Clinical Age Research Unit, King's College Hospital, Denmark Hill, London SE5 9RS, UK.**

**Email: cameron.swift@kcl.ac.uk**

---

**Author:** <sup>A</sup>emeritus professor of healthcare of the elderly, King's College London School of Medicine, London, UK