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Department  
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Public Health  
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# **Evidence based public health nursing and midwifery**

**A summary of NICE guidance to underpin  
practice**

**Public Health Outcome Domain Three – Health  
protection**

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# 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.*



**Why use evidence based practice?**

**Best practice, value for money, high  
quality care**



## 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 9.

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 Three – Health protection.

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:

PH18 Needle and syringe programmes

PH21 Reducing differences in the uptake of immunisations

PH33 Increasing the uptake of HIV testing among black Africans in England

PH34 Increasing the uptake of HIV testing among men who have sex with men

PH36 Prevention and control of healthcare-associated infections

PH37 Tuberculosis - hard-to-reach groups

## Health Protection Programmes

Nurses and midwives have a critical role to play in the promotion of programmes to reduce the likelihood and occurrence of infections and communicable diseases within the wider community. This will be variable in terms of their specific role however through all contacts nurses should seek to secure opportunities to protect the public from preventable causes of ill health.

## Implications for leadership and practice

### **Needle & Syringe Programmes**

- Develop awareness of Needle & Syringe Programmes amongst practitioners and ensure that the importance of signposting is understood

### **Childhood immunisations**

- Responsibility for ensuring appropriate training and education programmes to meet recommendations
- Health promotion opportunities (Making every contact count) for HV's, school nurses, practice nurses, midwives

### **HIV**

- Ensuring contacts are maximised and pathways are in place for HIV testing and follow up
- Targeted intervention plus opportunistic health promotion for Black African communities & men who have sex with men
- Ensuring pathways are in place for testing of at risk individuals in appropriate environments

### **TB**

- Nurse leaders working in areas where people are at risk or those who work with hard to reach populations should ensure that nursing teams understand referral and treatment processes and actively promote awareness, targeting screening
- Nurses working within settings or areas with hard to reach groups will need to work in partnership with MDTB teams and support people to access screening and treatment

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

### **Needle & Syringe Programmes**

- Promote the benefits of NSP's
- Offer advice and information on, and referrals to, services which aim to reduce the harm associated with injecting drug use and encourage people to stop using drugs or to switch to non-injecting methods

### **Immunisation Uptake**

- Provide parents and young people with tailored information, advice and support to ensure they know about the recommended routine childhood vaccinations and the benefits and risks
- Check the immunisation status of children and young people at every appropriate opportunity.
- Ensure all staff involved in immunisation services are appropriately trained.
- Improve access to immunisation services

## **HIV – Black African communities and men who have sex with men**

In areas where there is an identified need:

- Promote testing
- Work with community organisations to promote HIV testing in appropriate environments
- Communication must confirm confidentiality, use social media to promote local testing and respect cultural sensitivities
- Ensure staff in primary or specialist services are knowledgeable about testing and pathways for referral and can recognise symptoms associated with HIV infection
- Provide wider health promotion advice
- Increase uptake of testing and health promotion through use of local settings and areas where Black Africans and men who have sex with men may meet reducing stigma of testing and promoting early identification
- Promote annual testing with sexually active men who have sex with men to test for HIV

Specialist sexual health services

- Promote HIV testing amongst all men who attend services
- Ensure staff are appropriately trained and supported

Primary and secondary care

- Offer and recommend HIV testing to men as part of the integrated healthcare offered to men who are known to have sex with men

## **TB – These recommendations in the main apply to nurses working within Health Protection or Multi-disciplinary Tuberculosis Teams (MDTB)**

- Carry out appropriate engagement with TB programs & MDTB's
- Ensure an appropriate and skilled workforce
- Nurses working with MDTB's & organizations should raise awareness, educate staff & provide support in conjunction with local professionals in contact with hard to reach groups including Prison staff
- Raise awareness of TB among hard-to-reach groups ensuring access to services and appropriate information
- Ensure health promotion interventions are culturally sensitive

Staff in Prison and Immigration Centres

- Promotion of communication with TB liaison leads



- Development of policy by working with the MDTB team and the local Public Health England unit
- Agreed care pathways with all stakeholders
- MDTB teams working in partnership with Prison healthcare staff managing investigations and follow up
- Screening on arrival of all prisoners/ detainees as per NICE guidelines
- Continuity of treatment on transfer
- Robust management of infection controls procedures

#### Primary Care

- Increase access to primary care and increase awareness of local services for vulnerable migrants
- Ensure access to screening for 'at risk' groups

#### Substance misusers and prison populations

- Appropriate testing linking Hepatitis B& C screening
- Named TB case managers
- Appropriate testing in high incident areas

#### Rapid Access

- Appropriate referral pathways with local service availability
- MDTB teams supported by specialist TB nurses
- Swift referral from healthcare professionals with diagnostics in place

#### Enhanced case management

- Comprehensive care planning
- Ensure those lost to follow up are notified to the appropriate body

## 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.](#)