

# National guidelines: What are they?

## Why national guidelines?

National guidelines indicate the benefits and risks of different interventions and support health and medical care professionals in prioritising the right interventions for those with the greatest need. The purpose of the guidelines is to ensure that people have access to good health and medical care.

## What areas do the guidelines cover?

The National Board of Health and Welfare draws up national guidelines for diseases and conditions that affect large numbers of people and which require significant resources. There are guidelines in mental health, musculoskeletal diseases, diabetes, dementia, substance abuse and dependence, disease prevention methods, palliative care, dental care, cancer, asthma and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease and cardiovascular disease.

## Who are the guidelines intended for?

The National Board of Health and Welfare's national guidelines are primarily intended for those who make decisions concerning the allocation of resources within health and medical care and social services. The guidelines are also applicable for other professionals working in these areas.

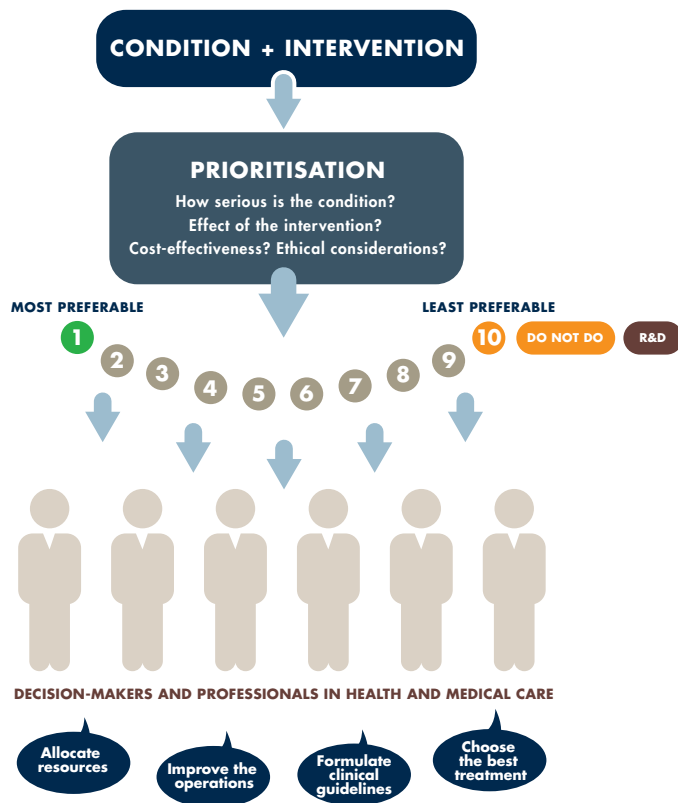
## What do the guidelines contain?

The guidelines contain recommendations about which interventions should be implemented for a certain condition. The condition could be a disease (e.g. diabetes) or a problem rooted in a disease (a person with schizophrenia who is homeless). An intervention is the action taken by health and medical care professionals to diagnose or treat the condition or to solve the problem.

The guidelines compare different kinds of interventions and recommend which one should be implemented taking into account the following questions:

- How serious is the condition?
- How does the intervention benefit the patient or consumer?
- How cheap or expensive is the intervention in relation to its effect?
- Are there other, better interventions for this specific condition?

## Preparation and implementation



The recommendations are structured on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is the most preferable and 10 is the least preferable.

The recommendations also specify which interventions should be avoided altogether – “do not do” – and which interventions should only be implemented within the framework of research and development – “R&D”.

*Illustration: Svensk information AB*

## Do guidelines make a difference?

To find out whether the national guidelines actually make a difference and help to improve health and medical care, the guidelines contain indicators. These indicators are a tool that allows us to measure and compare results in health, medical and dental care, as well as in the social services.

These indicators form the basis of the National Board of Health and Welfare’s national health and medical care evaluations, but can also be used for follow-up at regional and local level.

## Do you want to know more about ...

- how we develop the guidelines?
- who is involved in develop the guidelines?
- how we collaborate with other authorities?
- how we monitor and update the guidelines?
- which guidelines are next to be updated?
- what areas are next to receive their own set of national guidelines?
- which guidelines have related national evaluation projects?
- which indicators are available for a certain area?
- how to receive updates about the national guidelines?

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