

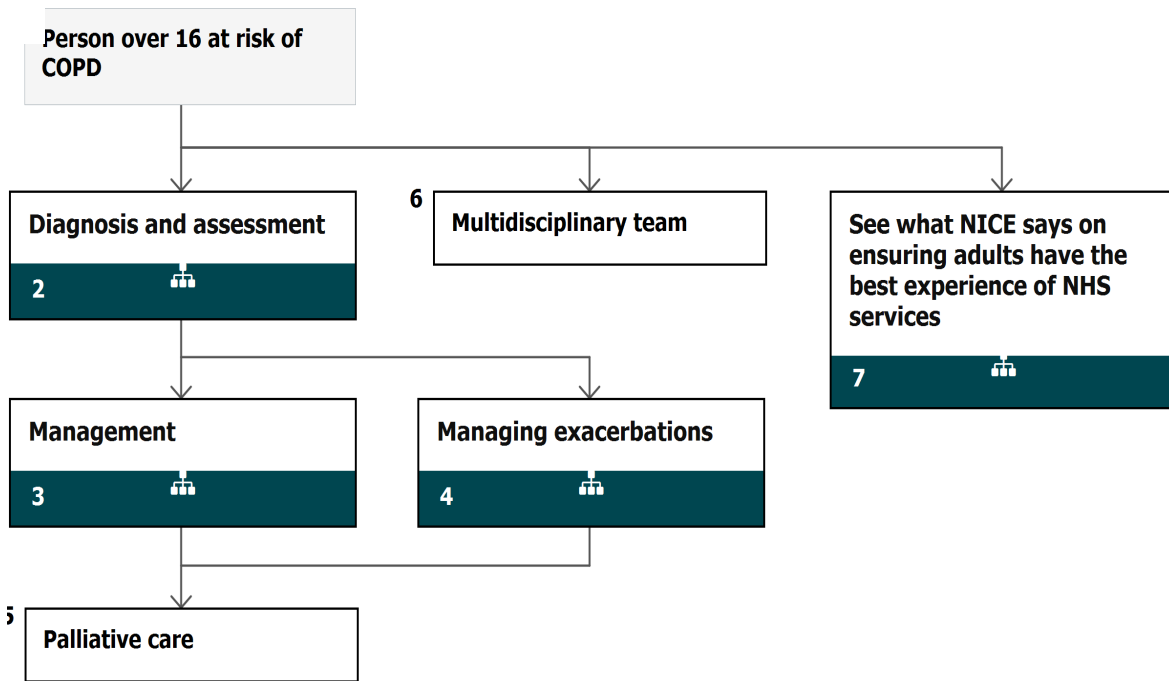
COPD overview

NICE Pathways bring together everything NICE says on a topic in an interactive flowchart. NICE Pathways are interactive and designed to be used online.

They are updated regularly as new NICE guidance is published. To view the latest version of this NICE Pathway see:

<http://pathways.nice.org.uk/pathways/chronic-obstructive-pulmonary-disease>
NICE Pathway last updated: 12 July 2018

This document contains a single flowchart and uses numbering to link the boxes to the associated recommendations.



1 Person over 16 at risk of COPD

No additional information

2 Diagnosis and assessment

See Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease / Diagnosing and assessing COPD

3 Management

See Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease / Managing stable COPD

4 Managing exacerbations

See Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease / Managing exacerbations of COPD

5 Palliative care

Opioids should be used when appropriate to palliate breathlessness in patients with end-stage COPD which is unresponsive to other medical therapy.

Benzodiazepines, tricyclic antidepressants, major tranquillisers and oxygen should also be used when appropriate for breathlessness in patients with end-stage COPD unresponsive to other medical therapy.

Patients with end-stage COPD and their family and carers should have access to the full range of services offered by multidisciplinary palliative care teams, including admission to hospices.

See what NICE says on end of life care for people with life-limiting conditions.

6 Multidisciplinary team

COPD care should be delivered by a multidisciplinary team.

The following functions should be considered when defining the activity of the multidisciplinary team:

- assessing patients (including performing spirometry, assessing the need for oxygen, the need for aids for daily living and the appropriateness of delivery systems for inhaled therapy)
- care and treatment of patients (including non-invasive ventilation, pulmonary rehabilitation, hospital-at-home/early discharge schemes, providing palliative care, identifying and managing anxiety and depression, advising patients on relaxation techniques, dietary issues, exercise, social security benefits and travel)
- advising patients on self-management strategies
- identifying and monitoring patients at high risk of exacerbations and undertaking activities which aim to avoid emergency admissions
- advising patients on exercise
- education of patients and other health professionals.

It is recommended that respiratory nurse specialists form part of the multidisciplinary COPD team.

7 See what NICE says on ensuring adults have the best experience of NHS services

[See Patient experience in adult NHS services](#)

ASA

American Society of Anesthesiologists

ATS

American Thoracic Society

BODE

body mass index, airflow obstruction, dyspnoea and exercise capacity

BTS

British Thoracic Society

CEN

Comité Européen de Normalisation (European Committee for Standardisation)

COPD

chronic obstructive pulmonary disease

cor pulmonale

in the context of this guidance, the term 'cor pulmonale' has been adopted to define a clinical condition that is identified and managed on the basis of clinical features; this clinical syndrome of cor pulmonale includes patients who have right heart failure secondary to lung disease and those in whom the primary pathology is retention of salt and water, leading to the development of peripheral oedema

ECG

electrocardiogram

ERS

European Respiratory Society

FEV1

forced expiratory volume in 1 second

FVC

forced vital capacity

GOLD

global initiative for chronic obstructive lung disease

ICS

inhaled corticosteroid

LABA

long-acting beta₂ agonist

LAMA

long-acting muscarinic antagonist

LTOT

long-term oxygen therapy

MRC

Medical Research Council

NIV

non-invasive ventilation

PaO₂

partial pressure of oxygen in arterial blood

PaCO₂

partial pressure of carbon dioxide in arterial blood

PEF

peak expiratory flow

SABA

short-acting beta₂ agonist

SAMA

short-acting muscarinic antagonist

SaO₂

oxygen saturation of arterial blood

TLCO

carbon monoxide lung transfer factor

Sources

[Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease in over 16s: diagnosis and management \(2010\) NICE guideline CG101](#)

Your responsibility**Guidelines**

The recommendations in this guideline represent the view of NICE, arrived at after careful consideration of the evidence available. When exercising their judgement, professionals and practitioners are expected to take this guideline fully into account, alongside the individual needs, preferences and values of their patients or the people using their service. It is not

mandatory to apply the recommendations, and the guideline does not override the responsibility to make decisions appropriate to the circumstances of the individual, in consultation with them and their families and carers or guardian.

Local commissioners and providers of healthcare have a responsibility to enable the guideline to be applied when individual professionals and people using services wish to use it. They should do so in the context of local and national priorities for funding and developing services, and in light of their duties to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity and to reduce health inequalities. Nothing in this guideline should be interpreted in a way that would be inconsistent with complying with those duties.

Commissioners and providers have a responsibility to promote an environmentally sustainable health and care system and should assess and reduce the environmental impact of implementing NICE recommendations wherever possible.

Technology appraisals

The recommendations in this interactive flowchart represent the view of NICE, arrived at after careful consideration of the evidence available. When exercising their judgement, health professionals are expected to take these recommendations fully into account, alongside the individual needs, preferences and values of their patients. The application of the recommendations in this interactive flowchart is at the discretion of health professionals and their individual patients and do not override the responsibility of healthcare professionals to make decisions appropriate to the circumstances of the individual patient, in consultation with the patient and/or their carer or guardian.

Commissioners and/or providers have a responsibility to provide the funding required to enable the recommendations to be applied when individual health professionals and their patients wish to use it, in accordance with the NHS Constitution. They should do so in light of their duties to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity and to reduce health inequalities.

Commissioners and providers have a responsibility to promote an environmentally sustainable health and care system and should assess and reduce the environmental impact of implementing NICE recommendations wherever possible.

Medical technologies guidance, diagnostics guidance and interventional procedures guidance

The recommendations in this interactive flowchart represent the view of NICE, arrived at after careful consideration of the evidence available. When exercising their judgement, healthcare professionals are expected to take these recommendations fully into account. However, the interactive flowchart does not override the individual responsibility of healthcare professionals to make decisions appropriate to the circumstances of the individual patient, in consultation with the patient and/or guardian or carer.

Commissioners and/or providers have a responsibility to implement the recommendations, in their local context, in light of their duties to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations. Nothing in this interactive flowchart should be interpreted in a way that would be inconsistent with compliance with those duties.

Commissioners and providers have a responsibility to promote an environmentally sustainable health and care system and should assess and reduce the environmental impact of implementing NICE recommendations wherever possible.