ISSUED: 1 March 2011

Ref: NHSE/0xx

NHS Evidence Accreditation decision on the British Association for Sexual Health and HIV’s clinical guideline process

The process used by the British Association for Sexual Health and HIV (BASHH) to produce UK national guidelines has been formally approved under the NHS Evidence Accreditation Scheme.

NHS Evidence Accreditation verifies the most robustly-produced guidance available to health and social care professionals, enabling them to drive quality outcomes that are amongst the best in the world. It uses rigorous assessment processes based on international standards for guideline development produced by the Appraisal of Guidelines Research & Evaluation collaboration (AGREE).

The independent NHS Evidence Advisory Committee of experts in evidence synthesis, practising clinicians and lay people concluded that BASHH has a robust process in place for producing clinical guidance and that this is clearly described in a process manual. The methods to balance benefits and risks in formulating recommendations were found to be well described, as were the methods for evaluating the strength of evidence. In addition, the committee confirmed that the methods for peer review and keeping guidance up to date are rigorous components of the process.

All guidance available via NHS Evidence has been carefully selected for inclusion in search results from organisations which health and social care professionals can rely on for good quality information. However, only organisations whose guidance processes meet the committee’s exacting standards are accredited.

BASHH will now be able to carry the NHS Evidence Accreditation Mark on its clinical guidelines produced under the accredited process, assuring staff that they are accessing some of the best information available online to make informed decisions about patient care.

NHS Evidence offers comprehensive and constructive advice and feedback to all organisations to help address any gaps in guidance development.

Professor David Haslam, NHS Evidence Advisory Committee Chair said: “Today’s decision is testimony to the work that BASHH has put into producing rigorous guidelines that are helping health and social care professionals deliver a high standard of care to their patients. The accreditation process offers an important learning experience for all guidance producers; as with all applicants, the advisory committee has provided valuable feedback on how BASHH can further strengthen its guidance development processes going forward.”

Dr Keith Radcliffe, President, BASHH said: “I am delighted that the process used by BASHH to develop our clinical guidelines has been accredited by the NHS Evidence Advisory Committee. This provides the
strongest possible assurance that clinicians can have confidence in the recommendations made in our guidelines and that they are a very useful tool to support the delivery of high quality care to patients."

ENDs

Editor’s notes

1. The final accreditation report is available at http://www.evidence.nhs.uk/Accreditation/Pages/AccreditationFinalDecisions.aspx.
2. The Accreditation Mark is a registered trademark of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence. It appears next to titles within search results on the NHS Evidence portal to denote those information sources that have passed the NHS Evidence criteria for producing high-quality information.
3. Provided it is relevant to a search, information from accredited sources features on NHS Evidence in the top results, with the Accreditation Mark clearly displayed.
4. An accredited organisation can display the Accreditation Mark publicity as a sign of its high standard achieved in developing information.
5. Accreditation lasts for three years.

For further information contact Kristin O’Leary on 0161 219 3778 or email Kristin.oleary@nice.org.uk