

Requesting our advice

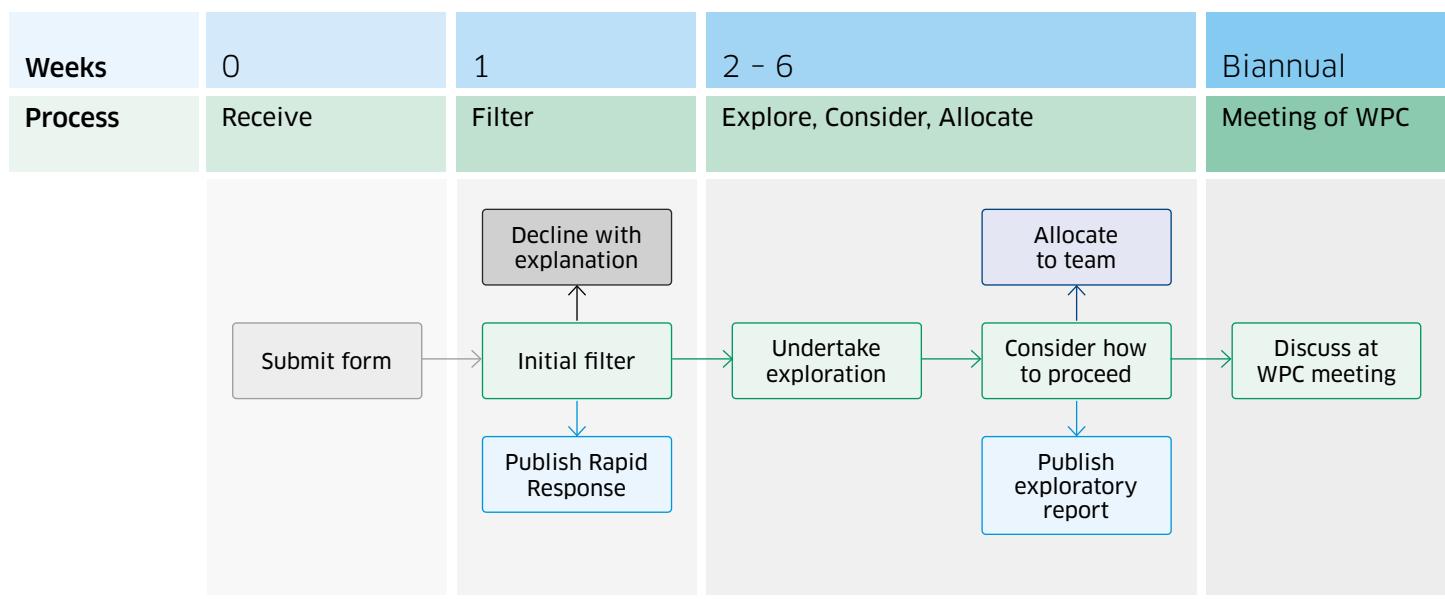




Receive request

When we receive your request, we consider it in relation to national and organisational priorities as well as our current work programme.

Taking on new work – Process



We receive your request seeking help with an issue.

The request is filtered against set criteria. At this stage, work may be declined, explored further or referred for Rapid Response.

We undertake a topic exploration to inform further consideration. Each topic exploration is considered in detail.

Candidates for major pieces of work are discussed at our Work Programme Committee (WPC) meeting.



Submitting a request

You can request support by filling in the form on our [webpages](#). You can also request a form from any of our teams. If you would like to discuss your request first, please get in touch using the contact details on the website.

Our form for requesting support is designed to provide us with the right information to decide how best to help you with your request.

The form asks for:

1. Your details

- Name of referrer(s) and role.
- Other stakeholders interested in this topic area/question.

2. Topic, issue or question you want to address

- Rationale for undertaking an assessment of this topic.
- Any potential health or wellbeing benefits to patients or health and care services.
- Uncertainties around the evidence base or best/good practice.
- Variation in provision or outcome of an intervention, test or procedure across Scotland.
- Impact on resource allocation.

3. Current situation and relevance in Scotland

- Relevant population or patient group epidemiology or clinical activity rates.
- Key outcomes of interest.
- Current context across health and care, including settings, treatment pathways, national programmes of work and ongoing research.

- Relationship to current Scottish Government priorities/policies, the national performance framework, public health priorities, and Healthcare Improvement Scotland priorities.

4. Scope for us to help

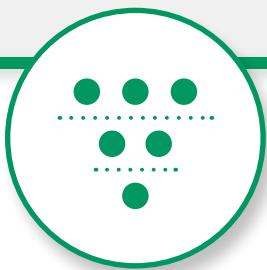
- How will the output from this work be used?
- Are there existing implementation strategies?
- How would successful support be defined?
- What measures could be used to evaluate impact?

5. Time frames

- What are the key milestones.

6. Information to get us started

- Existing supporting documentation/references for this topic, including any cost information.
- Any additional issues related to use or initiation, for example, staffing, training, facilities, infrastructure.
- People with knowledge/expertise in this topic area who could be consulted, including patient organisations.
- Any other information you think may be relevant.



Filter

We filter each request form to ensure we are the best placed organisation to undertake this work.

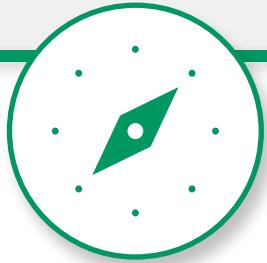
- 1 Requests that are suitable for us to consider will be explored in more detail**

- 2 Reasons for declining a request will be fed back to the referrer**

- 3 Requests may be prioritised for a Rapid Response depending on timescales**

Our decisions will be informed by:

- The potential for our support to have an impact and make a difference to health and care provision.
- Whether the level of uncertainty relating to evidence and implementation is such that it could be addressed by us.
- The extent of inappropriate variation across Scotland, taking into account variation in practice, outcomes, availability and uptake.
- The level of resource required to support the request, taking into account the above.
- Whether we are the most appropriate organisation to undertake this work.
- Whether the work aligns with national or organisational priorities.



Explore

We conduct an exploration of the topic area to enable further consideration. This involves further conversations with you about your request.

Every filtered request will be explored. Topic exploration provides an overview of our initial findings, specifically:

1. What were we asked to look at?

- A description of the problem you are hoping to address through working with us.
- Clarification of the evidence-based research approach we may use.
- Concise information about the population of interest/intervention/comparator/outcome.

2. The importance of this topic

- Why is this important and how can we help?
- What is the breadth of support/interest for this referral across the wider community?
- Where does the work fit alongside health and care priorities? Is there a fit with national strategy?

3. The methodological approach we took

- What approach was used for the exploration?
- What was the rationale for this approach?

4. Timeframe requested

- Details of time-sensitive reasons for a specified time frame.

5. Summary of the evidence

- An overview of the quality, quantity and currency of potentially relevant evidence.
- Any relevant work underway or undertaken previously by Healthcare Improvement Scotland.

6. Summary and conclusions

- A summary of our findings and how far they have gone to addressing the query.

7. Next steps

- Our suggestions for next steps for the referral for discussion at 'consideration' stage.



Consider new work

Following the completion of each exploration, our consideration of new work comprises two key steps:

1 A first look by an internal team

1. What were we asked to look at?

- Reviews topic exploration (topic exploration author to contribute to discussion).
- Next steps available to our team:
 - Topic is referred to our Work Programme Committee.
 - No further work required and proceed to publication of exploratory report.
 - Work allocated to one of our teams.
- Decisions will be dependent on factors including:
 - Clarity of request.
 - Healthcare Improvement Scotland priorities and work programme commitments.
 - Added value of additional work (beyond topic exploration).
 - Timeframes.
 - Availability of skills and resource/capacity within our teams.
 - Extent of multi-team/stakeholder involvement required.

2 Commissioning of new work by our Work Programme Committee

2. Work Programme Committee

- Take an overview of our work programme and make recommendations for additions to the programme.
- Consider a checklist of factors when commissioning new work (see page 6).
- Next steps available to Work Programme Committee:
 - Determine the most appropriate output based on the resources we produce, and initiates work within or between our teams.
 - Establishes links to other relevant teams across Healthcare Improvement Scotland, as required.



Checklist for work programme prioritisation

Strategic considerations

1. Does the work meet with the current areas of priority for Healthcare Improvement Scotland?
2. What is the potential impact of this work? How is it expected to affect outcomes, and how might this be measured?
3. Have we previously done work in this area, and if so, did we give a commitment to further work?
4. Are there risks or sensitivities attached to us taking on the work?

Scope of work

5. Is there a need for the work to address uncertainty surrounding the topic for health and social care in Scotland? (Uncertainty could relate to cost effectiveness, clinical effectiveness, safety, etc.)
6. Can duplication of effort be avoided by identifying and exploring the potential to signpost to, collaborate on, or adapt recently published or ongoing evidence-based advice, or existing Healthcare Improvement Scotland work?
7. Can a focused research question or objective be formulated to enable a product to be delivered?
8. Is there likely to be evidence available upon which to base an assessment? In the context of limited evidence, would a product still be helpful to inform practice or policy in NHSScotland? What alternatives are there to published evidence?

Resources

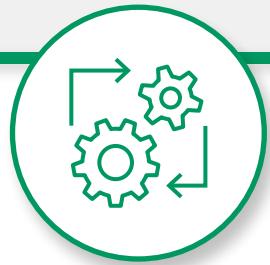
9. Do we have the necessary skills and capacity to do the work? If not, would gaining the skills contribute to the delivery of our organisational priorities?
10. Is the request accompanied by funding? Would it be feasible to make use of any funding offered within the desirable timeframe, including any staff recruitment?

Prioritisation

11. Which, if any, activity would need to be displaced to give capacity to undertake the new work?

Timing

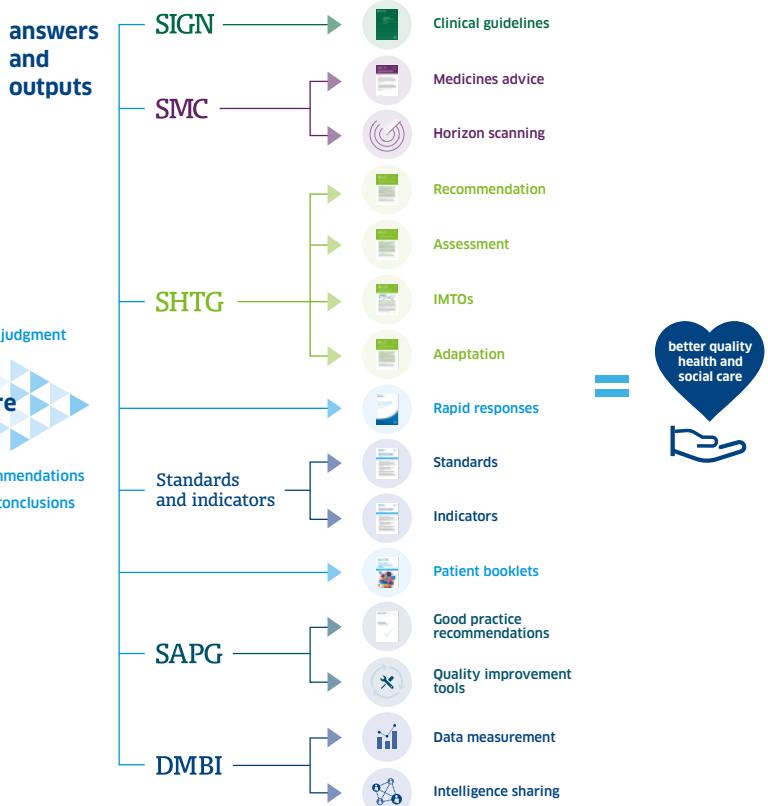
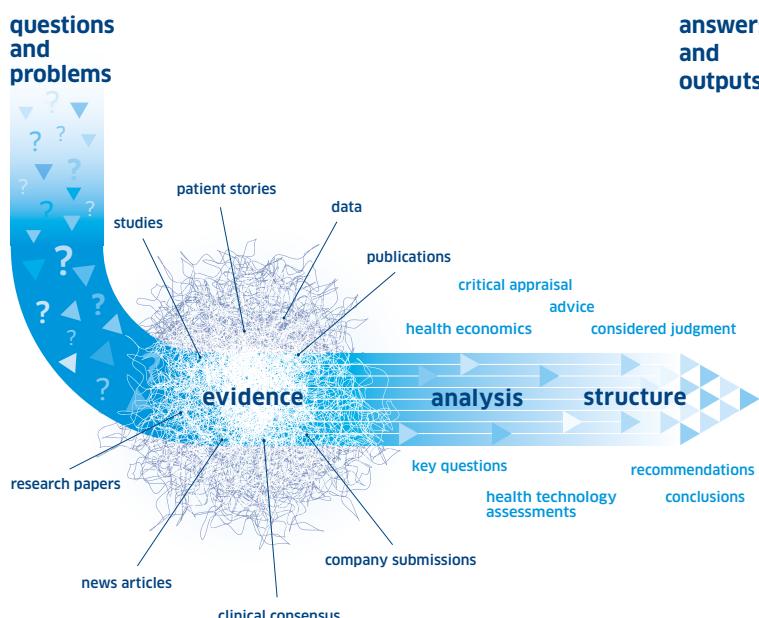
12. Is there a time-sensitive decision which our work will inform?
13. Is it feasible to deliver the specified work within the requested timeline? If not, could something else be done that would still be helpful?



Allocate to our teams

The team assigned to the work will contact and work alongside you on your request.

How we work





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