



To: CDC and Road Safety

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Subject: Essential Evidence on a page: No. 32 NICE Guidance on the promotion and creation of physical environments that support increased levels of physical activity

Top line: The guidance offers the first NICE evidence-based recommendations on how to improve the physical environment to encourage physical activity. Specific recommendations are addressed to those working within the transport planning sector.

In 2008 the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) issued guidance on interventions in the built and natural environment to encourage physical activity.¹ The Guidance has been issued for NHS and other professionals who have responsibility for the built or natural environment. Importantly, this includes local transport authorities, transport planners, those working in education, community, voluntary and private sectors. It was informed by Evidence Reviews, including one on transport.²

The seven recommendations cover strategy, policy and plans, transport, public open spaces, buildings and schools. They include:

- Ensure planning applications for new developments always prioritise the need for people (including those whose mobility is impaired) to be physically active as a routine part of their daily life.
- Plan and provide a comprehensive network of routes for walking, cycling and using other modes of transport involving physical activity.
- Ensure public open spaces and public paths can be reached on foot, by bicycle and using other modes of transport involving physical activity.

Recommendations 2 and 3 specifically addressed transport and planning interventions to ensure pedestrians, cyclists and users of other modes of transport that involve physical activity are given the highest priority when developing or maintaining streets and roads through the following:

- re-allocate road space to support physically active modes of transport (as an example, this could be achieved by widening pavements and introducing cycle lanes)
- restrict motor vehicle access (for example, by closing or narrowing roads to reduce capacity)
- introduce road-user charging schemes
- introduce traffic-calming schemes to restrict vehicle speeds (using signage and changes to highway design)
- create safe routes to schools (for example, by using traffic-calming measures near schools and by creating or improving walking and cycle routes to schools).
- Plan and provide a comprehensive network of routes for walking, cycling and using other modes of transport involving physical activity. These routes should offer everyone (including people whose mobility is impaired) convenient, safe and attractive access to workplaces, homes, schools and other public facilities. They should be built and maintained to a high standard.

¹ www.nice.org.uk/PH008

² NICE, 2007 (Unpublished) Physical activity and the environment. Review One: Transport Review.