HTA319

# Have NICE's Increased Cost-Effectiveness Thresholds Improved Technology Appraisal Outcomes?

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## INTRODUCTION

- On 1st December 2025, NICE announced it was raising its acceptable Incremental Cost-Effectiveness Ratio (ICER) threshold from the long-standing £20,000-£30,000 to £25,000-£35,000 per QALY gained, with the new range taking effect on 24th March 2026

## OBJECTIVE

- The increased thresholds aim to improve patient access to innovative high-cost therapies in the UK, and this study examines whether early appraisal data supports this objective

## METHODS

- We conducted a retrospective analysis of NICE single technology appraisal (STA) outcomes using publicly available guidance data
- The post-ICER threshold increase period (24th March 2026 to 25th June 2026; n=54) and the post-announcement period (1st December 2025 to 24th March 2026) were compared against 6-month (n=27), 1-year (n=76), and 3-year (n=217) pre-announcement baselines

## RESULTS

- After the formal ICER threshold increase, a measurable improvement was observed vs. the pre-announcement period in
  - recommendation rates
  - manufacturer engagement with the NICE process (i.e. terminated appraisals)
- Recommendation rates stood
  - 42.3% post-ICER threshold increase
  - 33.0% in 2025
  - 36.2% across 2023-2025
- Rates of terminated appraisals due to manufacturer non-submissions were
  - 19.2% post-ICER threshold increase
  - 26.7% ‘post announcement’ (the early post-announcement, pre-implementation period)
  - 24.2% in 2025
- Furthermore, non-recommended outcomes fell to 0% post-announcement
  - this should be interpreted cautiously given small sample sizes and NICE's stated intention to pause borderline appraisals pending threshold implementation

***Figure 1:*** *Recommendation rate in NICE STAs (%)*

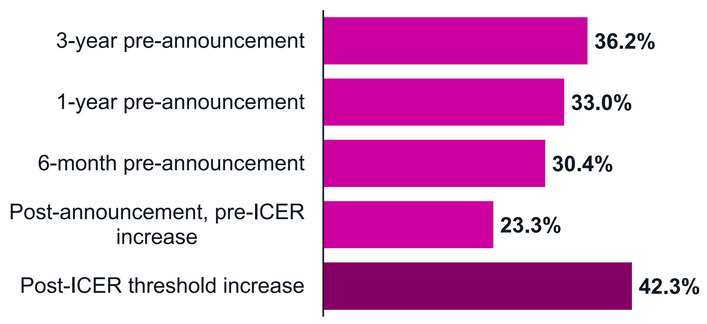



***Figure 2:*** *Appraisals terminated due to manufacturer non-submission (%)*

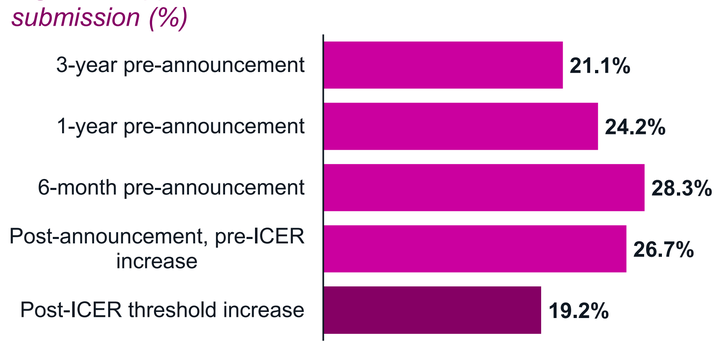



***Figure 3:*** *Outcome mix by period (% of appraisals)*

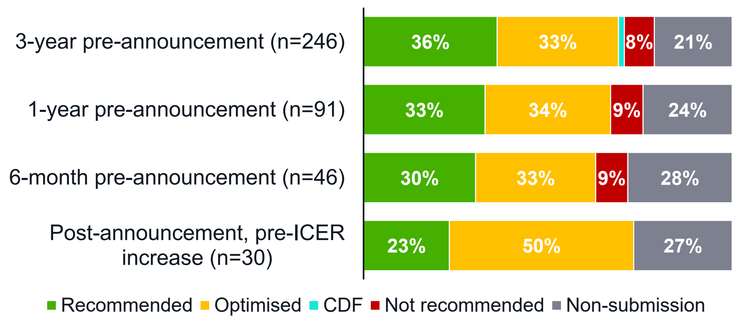



***Figure 4:*** *Positive outcomes (Recommended + Optimised) by period (%)*

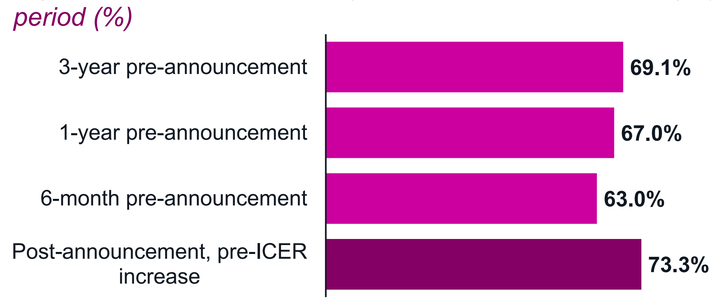



***Figure 5:*** *Annual recommendation vs non-submission rate, 2015–2025, and since announcement (%)*

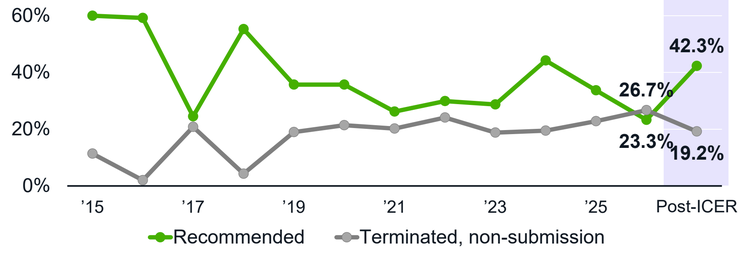



***Figure 6:*** *Key takeaways*

**£25–35k**
per QALY gained: new ICER threshold range, previously £20,000-£30,000

**>20%**
relative reduction in terminated appraisals due to manufacturer non-submissions

**0%**
non-recommended outcomes post-announcement; interpret cautiously given small sample sizes

## CONCLUSIONS

- Early evidence suggests that the NICE ICER increase has translated into improved appraisal outcomes, though the impact was not immediate
- In the initial post-announcement but pre-implementation period, outcomes initially deteriorated relative to historical baselines potentially reflecting a strategic pause from manufacturers. Following formal implementation on 24th March 2026, an improvement was observed: manufacturer non-submission rates have reduced for the first time in 3-years and positive recommendations have drastically increased, suggesting that increased willingness-to-pay has somewhat mitigated manufacturer concerns around Most Favoured Nation (MFN) pricing policy
- Continued monitoring will be essential to determine whether threshold changes ultimately deliver improved patient access

**ABBREVIATIONS**

CDF: Cancer Drugs Fund; ICER: Incremental Cost-Effectiveness Ratio; MFN: Most Favoured Nation; NICE: National Institute for Health and Care Excellence; QALY: quality-adjusted life year; STA: single technology appraisal

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