

UK NATIONAL SCREENING COMMITTEE

Child Hypertension Screening Policy Position Statement

17 November 2011

Aim

1. This note provides background to the agenda item addressing the review of the evidence for screening for hypertension in children. It proposes a policy statement for consideration by the UK National Screening Committee (UK NSC).

2. The current review is attached for information.

Context of the review

3. The last time the policy was considered before the current review was in 2006.

Review process

4. Prior to the public consultation the document was sent to the National Clinical Director for Children, Young People and Maternity Services and the Department of Health for England's Professional Advisor in Obstetrics and Gynaecology. Both endorsed the conclusions of the review.

5. The review was posted on the UK NSC website for three months. It was also sent directly to the British Hypertension Society, the Vascular Society, Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health and the Royal College of General Practitioners.

6. No responses were received.

Policy position statement

7. Screening for hypertension should not be offered to children.

8. Screening for hypertension in children is not recommended due to the lack of: understanding of the condition, an agreed definition of the condition, a simple valid test, acceptance of BP-taking in children by professionals and trial data of a screening programme.

9. The policy should be reviewed in three years time unless there is significant new peer reviewed evidence in the meantime.

Action

10. The UK NSC has agreed to the proposed policy position statement.