

Evidence Based Interventions and Clinical Standards Policy

This leaflet explains the policy we have in north central London for providing treatments that will give the most benefit to patients. It explains why we introduced this policy and why some treatments have been added to the policy in April 2019.

What is the policy?

The Evidence Based Interventions and Clinical Standards Policy has been in place in north central London since 2011. This policy deals only with planned procedures and treatments. It does not deal with emergency care or cancer treatments.

Why do we need a policy?

As medicine advances, some treatments can be found to be inappropriate in certain cases. Sometimes, a safer, less invasive alternative is available that would be a better option. Having an operation can be painful and can result in unintended complications or harm. Therefore, they should only be offered to patients who really need it.

What does the policy aim to do?

The policy makes sure we use the best medical evidence available when discussing with patients what healthcare treatments could benefit them. It is updated from time to time when medicine advances and improves.

The overall aim, is to prevent avoidable harm to patients, to avoid unnecessary operations, and to free up clinical time by providing NHS care that is evidence-based and appropriate.

Healthcare services are bought by our five Clinical Commissioning Groups, (Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Haringey and Islington). We use the best medical evidence available when deciding the right treatment for each patient, and when is the best time for them to have the treatment.

We do this because we want to provide fair and equal access to treatments for all residents no matter where they live or what their background.

Why are some treatments included in the policy?

We have included treatments in the policy for three reasons:

1. **Clinical best practice:** For some procedures, the policy outlines evidence-based process for clinicians to follow. This makes sure that the right treatment is offered to patients at the right time when they meet the right conditions. This allows less invasive and other alternative treatments to be tried or considered first. A patient will then be referred for treatment, following discussion with their doctor, when they meet certain conditions. The following operations fall into this category:

- Knee arthroplasty (knee replacement)
- Hip arthroplasty (hip replacement)
- Cataract surgery (replacing a clouded eye lens with an artificial lens)

2. **Making sure we provide treatments with evidenced impact:** Some treatments don't have enough evidence to show how they will benefit patients. These treatments are not routinely provided and are treated on a case by case basis following a discussion between the patient and their doctor. The following treatments fall into this category:

- Breast Reduction
- Removal of benign skin lesions
- Grommets
- Tonsillectomy
- Haemorrhoid Surgery
- Hysterectomy for heavy bleeding
- Chalazia Removal
- Shoulder decompression
- Carpal tunnel syndrome release
- Dupuytren's contracture release
- Ganglion excision
- Trigger finger release
- Varicose vein surgery

3. **Making sure we provide the most effective and current techniques:** when medical evidence shows that treatments are no longer considered to be the most effective, and may even be harmful, we don't provide these treatments. The following treatments fall into this category:
- Intervention for snoring (without obstructive sleep apnoea)
 - Dilatation and curettage for heavy menstrual bleeding
 - Knee arthroscopy with osteoarthritis
 - Injection for non-specific low back pain without sciatica

What does this mean for you?

If you think you might need one of the treatments included in the policy, you should continue to talk to your doctor about your symptoms, how they are affecting you and together you can decide what will be the best treatment for you.

Once you have discussed options with your doctor, they will make sure that you are referred for treatment based on the best medical practice and what will provide the best benefit for you.

For more information

See North London Partner's website

<http://www.northlondonpartners.org.uk/EvidenceBasedFAQs>

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