

What does this mean for patients?

By having one standardised core set of policies, all patients who may require a Procedure of Low Clinical Priority (PLCP) treatment will have to meet the same criteria. This ensures all patients are treated fairly.

There may be circumstances where a patient will no longer be able to receive a treatment, which they previously had. In these cases, the patient will be supported by their GP to consider the alternatives available to them, which may be of greater benefit.

The criteria for a core set of procedures will be the same, regardless of which GP the patient sees, or which hospital they attend.

How we decide what a PLCP treatment is?

CCGs across Hampshire are supported by a Priorities Committee which is led by public health consultants and senior clinicians.

This Committee reviews the evidence behind treatments and gives advice to CCGs on whether a treatment should be given a low or high priority for funding.

There is also a CCG Referral Panel, whose members include doctors, other clinicians, medicines management and allied health professionals.

This Panel reviews individual requests for treatments which are either not routinely available (because they are new or excluded from funding) - or where there are funding restrictions and the referring doctor is making a case that those should be set aside for a particular individual patient.

The clinical circumstances may be exceptional if an individual's condition differs significantly from most other patients with the same illness/condition – and he or she is likely to benefit much more from the proposed treatment.

Making an Individual Funding Request (IFR)

If your doctor feels that you should receive a treatment that is not routinely funded by NHS Portsmouth & South East Hampshire CCGs, they will need to complete an application form and submit it to the NHS South, Central and West Commissioning Support Unit's (CSU) Individual Funding Request (IFR) team, with any supporting information.

When making an application, your doctor will need to demonstrate why they feel that there are exceptional clinical circumstances in your case. Requests cannot be submitted directly by the patient. This is because your doctor is best placed to know your clinical condition and how your circumstances compare to similar patients, and treatment options.

How will a decision be made?

Requests for treatment are received, in confidence, to the CSU's IFR team. Most are screened against the existing policy and, where a clinical view is required the request is submitted to the Referral Panel for consideration

CCG Referral Panel

Requests for funding are considered by the Panel in light of local policy, national guidance (where available) and all the clinical information that has been submitted to support the request.

This Panel meets twice a month. If the Panel finds that the clinical circumstances of the patient's case are not exceptional, funding cannot be approved.

Decision-making principles

We operate in the context of an Ethical Framework, which stresses the need for decisions to be fair, consistent and equitable. Decisions are made after taking into account all of the following:

- the patient's clinical need
- the effectiveness of the treatment
- the cost of the treatment
- that all other treatments have been exhausted.

Can I attend the Panel meeting?

Patients are not able to attend the Panel meeting. They are not open to any members of the public.

It is felt that it would be inappropriate for a patient to be put in a position that could make them feel that approval or otherwise relied on their "performance" at the Panel.

Also the distress of a patient could have an effect on Panel members which might mean that decision making was not impartial and consistent.

Informing you of the decision

However when it comes to informing you of the decision, NHS Portsmouth & South East Hampshire CCGs strongly believe that Panel decisions are best discussed directly between you and your own doctor.

This is so that the decision can be explained to you and you can discuss as soon as possible what it means in respect of the next steps of your care.

The doctor who made the request will usually be informed of the Panel's decision within two - three working days of the Panel meeting and they will know to contact you to discuss the decision.



Will the NHS fund my treatment?

NHS Portsmouth & South East Hampshire Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) cover the three local CCGs – Portsmouth; Fareham and Gosport; and South Eastern Hampshire. They plan and commission (pay for) most local healthcare services in our area, including a wide range of services for patients registered with GP practices.

New treatments are becoming available on a regular basis but, as you know, the demand for healthcare is growing fast - and we only have a fixed amount of money to spend.

Unfortunately tough decisions sometimes have to be made. We need to prioritise our resources for treatments which:

- i) are proven to work
- ii) improve people's health
- iii) offer good value for money.

There are, therefore, some treatments that our CCGs do not routinely fund. We refer to some of these as "Procedures of Lower Clinical Priority (PLCP)".

These include:

New treatment, or existing treatments for a new condition where there is limited evidence that they work and/or provide good value for money;

Treatments that are only funded for patients where there are aspects of their clinical condition which indicate that the treatment will be effective in their case.

This leaflet explains how your doctor can ask, on your behalf, our three CCGs to fund a treatment that we do not routinely fund.

This is called making an Individual Funding Request (IFR) and NHS Portsmouth, NHS Fareham and Gosport and South Eastern Hampshire CCGs work to a clear policy when dealing with these requests, which you can download at fundingrequests.ccsu.nhs.uk

What happens if the Panel does not agree to fund your treatment?

If your doctor disagrees with the Panel's decision, and feels that there is additional information which had not been made available with the original request, or that information has not been interpreted correctly, they ask for the request to be reconsidered. They should do this by writing to the IFR Team. The request, together with the new information will be reconsidered at the next available Panel meeting.

Requests to reconsider will only be accepted from your doctor – and not by individuals or any other party.

If, alternatively, your doctor disagrees with the decision, and feels that the Panel has been unfair in the process, they may appeal and must write to the IFR Team and outline the basis for the appeal.

Appeals can only be made on the basis of the process and not the decision itself.



**Portsmouth &
South East Hampshire**
Clinical Commissioning Groups

Patient Information Leaflet

Individual Funding Requests

How the NHS in
Portsmouth & South East
Hampshire considers
them

Policy for
Procedures of Lower Clinical Priority
(PLCP)