

Commissioning Policy Individual Funding Request

Reversal of Vasectomy or Female Sterilisation

Prior Approval Policy

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**TREATMENT UNDER THIS POLICY REQUIRES PRIOR APPROVAL FROM THE
ICB INDIVIDUAL FUNDING TEAM
THIS POLICY RELATES TO ALL PATIENTS**

Reversal of Vasectomy or Female Sterilisation

Policy Statement & Date of Adoption: 16th September 2016

Reversal of Vasectomy or Female Sterilisation (tubal ligation) is not routinely funded by the ICB and is subject to this restricted policy.

General Principles

Funding approval will only be given in line with these general principles. Where patients are unable to meet these principles in addition to the specific treatment criteria set out in this policy, funding approval will not be given.

1. Funding approval must be secured by primary care prior to referring patients seeking corrective surgery. Referring patients to secondary care without funding approval having been secured not only incurs significant costs in out-patient appointments for patients that may not qualify for surgery, but inappropriately raises the patient's expectation of treatment.
2. On limited occasions, the ICB may approve funding for an assessment only in order to confirm or obtain evidence demonstrating whether a patient meets the criteria for funding. In such cases, patients should be made aware that the assessment does not mean that they will be provided with surgery and surgery will only be provided where it can be demonstrated that the patients meets the criteria to access treatment in this policy.
3. Where funding approval is given by the Individual Funding Request Panel, it will be available for a specified period of time, normally one year.
4. Funding approval will only be given where there is evidence that the treatment requested is effective and the patient has the potential to benefit from the proposed treatment. Where it is demonstrated that patients have previously been provided with the treatment with limited or diminishing benefit, funding approval is unlikely to be agreed.

Background

Reversal of Vasectomy

The initial vasectomy surgery is a minor operation; the tubes that carry sperm from a man's

testicles to the penis are cut, blocked or sealed. It is possible to have a vasectomy reversed. However, the procedure is not always successful. You have a better chance if it is done soon after the vasectomy.

If a reversal is carried out within 10 years of your vasectomy, the success rate is about 55%. This falls to 25% if your reversal is carried out more than 10 years after your vasectomy. Even if a surgeon manages to join up the vas deferens tubes again, pregnancy may still not be possible. (NHS Choices, 2015)

Risks

Most men feel sore and tender for a few days after the operation, and will usually experience some bruising and swelling on or around their scrotum. However, in some cases, a vasectomy and its attempted reversal can cause more serious problems such as haematoma, sperm granulomas, infection, long-term testicle pain and testicles feeling full. (NHS Choices, 2015)

Reversal of Female Sterilisation

The initial sterilisation surgery involves blocking or sealing the fallopian tubes, which link the ovaries to the womb (uterus). This prevents the woman's eggs from reaching sperm and becoming fertilised. Eggs will still be released from the ovaries as normal, but they will be absorbed naturally into the woman's body.

Female sterilisation can be reversed, but it is a very difficult process that involves removing the blocked part of the fallopian tube and re-joining the ends. There is no guarantee that you will be fertile again (be able to get pregnant) after a sterilisation reversal.

The success rates of female sterilisation reversal vary widely and depend on factors such as age and the method that was used in the original operation. For example, if your tubes were clipped rather than tied, a successful reversal is more likely. (Female Sterilisation Reversal)

Risks

There can be concerns with surgery and some people are more apprehensive than others about the prospect of having a general anaesthetic. Other risks surrounding the reversal of female sterilisation can include infection, bleeding, bruising, damage to other internal organs, blood clots and an unsuccessful reversal. In around <0.5% of cases, it may not be possible to reverse the sterilisation procedure in either of the tubes. This may be due to the damage caused by clips, or the amount of tubes removed during the original sterilisation. (NHS Choices, 2015)

Policy - Criteria to Access Treatment - PRIOR APPROVAL REQUIRED

Requests for reversal of vasectomy or female sterilisation will be approved where the following criteria are met:

1. A patient wishes to restore fertility following the death of an only living child,

AND

2. There are no other concerns about the expected fertility of the patient.

Patients who believe that they were not properly counselled as to the permanent nature of vasectomy or sterilisation prior to their treatment, and do not meet the criteria above, should raise their concerns with the providing institution. Reversals of vasectomy or sterilisation will not be routinely funded in such cases.

Patients who are not eligible for treatment under this policy may be considered on an individual basis where their GP or consultant believes exceptional circumstances exist that warrant deviation from the rule of this policy.

Individual cases will be reviewed at the ICB's Individual Funding Request Panel upon receipt of a completed application form from the patient's GP, consultant or clinician. Applications cannot be considered from patients personally.

If you would like further copies of this policy or need it in another format, such as Braille or another language, please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 0800 073 0907 or 0117 947 4477.

Related Policies:**Fertility Assessment and Treatment Policy**

Treatment will not be offered under this policy. Clinician's should refer to the intervention specific policy.

This policy has been developed with the aid of the following references:

Female Sterilisation Reversal. (n.d.). Complications of Female Sterilisation Reversal Surgery.

Retrieved October 12th, 2015, from Female Sterilisation Reversal:

<http://www.femalesterilizationreversal.co.uk/complications-of-female-sterilisation-reversal-surgery/>

NHS Choices. (2015, January 5th). NHS Choices. Retrieved October 12th, 2015, from Female Sterilisation: <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/contraception-guide/pages/female-sterilisation.aspx>

NHS Choices. (2015, July 14th). NHS Choices. Retrieved October 12th, 2015, from Can I get a sterilisation reversal on the NHS?: <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/contraception-guide/pages/sterilisation-reversal-nhs.aspx>

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