

### PoLCE - 20 May 2019 update

**20 policy areas have been updated and six policy areas are new inclusions.**

**All 17 policy areas within the national Evidenced Based Intervention (EBI) programme are included and eight policy areas produced via the London Choosing Wisely (LCW) programme are also incorporated.**

**There is overlap between EBI and LCW in five areas.**

Key changes in upcoming iteration:

#### London Choosing Wisely:

- Hip arthroplasty and Knee arthroplasty **\*NEW policy area\*** are included but Camden GPs should continue to refer to Camden MSK. Please reassure any patients who are concerned, that the thresholds represent good clinical practice and are not an attempt to “ration” hip and knee replacements. Ensure advice around exercise and lifestyle modifications (e.g. for smoking cessation and weight reduction) are made as appropriate in primary care.
- Back and interventional treatments for back pain. **\*NEW policy area\*** No change for Camden GPs, please continue to refer to Camden MSK service they can apply and approve for PoLCE if appropriate.
- Varicose veins updated. Updated in line with current evidence base and no longer any requirement for conservative measures. Can refer if symptomatic but still requires PoLCE.
- Benign Skin lesions updated. Minor changes including “regular pain” as an inclusion factor but please note the criteria is still only relevant if there is regular, significant and unavoidable trauma.

#### Evidence Based Interventions

- Cataracts. **\*NEW policy area\*** a corrected visual acuity of 6/9 or worse. If patients have best corrected visual acuity better than 6/9, specialist assessment should still be considered where there is a clear clinical indication or the patient has impairment in lifestyle such as substantial effect on activities of daily living, leisure activities, or risk of falls. This needs to be clearly evidenced and requested by the GP/optician.
- Grommets for glue ear in Children. **\*NEW policy area\***. GPs should continue to refer for this assessment as normal and Trusts will apply PoLCE criteria if met.
- Haemorrhoids. **\*NEW policy area\*** Haemorrhoids not responding to conservative management or grade 3-4 haemorrhoids with persistent pain or bleeding or irreducible and large external haemorrhoids.

- Trigger Finger. No change for Camden GPs. Please continue to refer to Camden MSK service and they can apply and approve for PoLCE if appropriate.
- Carpal tunnel surgery. Updated area. No change for Camden GPs. Please continue to refer to Camden MSK service and they can apply and approve for PoLCE if appropriate.
- Dupuytren's Contracture. Collagenase clostridium histolyticum for treating Dupuytren's contracture is funded according to criteria set out in NICE TA459 guidance. No change for Camden GPs. Continue to refer to Camden MSK service and they can apply and approve for PoLCE if appropriate.
- Ganglion excision. Please refer to Camden MSK or Minor surgery DES for aspiration in first instance. For possible excision, no change for Camden GPs. Continue to refer to Camden MSK service and they can apply and approve for PoLCE if appropriate.
- Subacromial Decompression in the treatment of subacromial shoulder pain. **\*New policy area\*** No change for Camden GPs. Continue to refer to Camden MSK service and they can apply and approve for PoLCE if appropriate.
- Chalazion. Updated criteria to include if interfering with lid anatomy and eye closure or if episodes of infection.
- Tonsillectomy. Minor amendments in criteria.
- Surgery for Sleep related Disordered Breathing. Minor amendments in criteria.
- Breast Reduction. Minor amendments in criteria.
- Gynaecomastia. No longer routinely funded, will require IFR application detailing individual and exceptional circumstances. Policy excludes cases secondary to medical treatment e.g. prostate cancer

**The following procedures are not routinely funded and will ALWAYS require IFR applications:**

- Breast mastopexy
- Hair loss
- Skin resurfacing and other surgical interventions for Scarring including laser, dermabrasion and chemical peels
- Tattoo removal
- Cosmetic botox injections
- Treatment of skin hyperpigmentation including referral for topical treatments and chemical peels, laser therapy
- Face lift
- Gynaecomastia (not for secondary causes)

**Note the Age criteria for Specific Procedures in Appendix 1**

Acupuncture	Age 2+
Bio-Feedback	Age 2+
Chalazia removal	Age 13+
Circumcision	Age 14+
Electrical stimulation	Age 2+
Hypnotherapy	Age 2+
Keloidectomy	Age 2+
Osteopathy/ osteopathic intervention	Age 2+
Removal of benign skin lesion	Age 2+
Selected use in palliative care	Age 2+
Tonsillectomy	Age 2+
Grommets in Glue Ear in children	Age 2+

**Top tips for GPs**

- Please check what is being requested is within the policy. For example a referral for injection of keloid scars by dermatology does not require prior PoLCE approval. PoLCE approval is required for keloidectomy, not for injections.
- Consider signposting to Minor Surgery DES for minor skin lesion removal which does not require prior PoLCE approval.
- Cryotherapy is not a PoLCE and should be considered in house or at neighbouring practice or patients can consider purchasing OTC.
- The age criteria for PoLCE has changed. It applies to adults except for the conditions listed in appendix 1 and above.
- For an MSK related PoLCE condition including carpal tunnel surgery, ganglia excision and Dupuytren's contracture, please refer to Camden MSK.

If you would like to feedback regarding the content of the PoLCE policy, please email the feedback form on the [PoLCE page of the GP website](#) to [nelcsu.hpsu@nhs.net](mailto:nelcsu.hpsu@nhs.net)

**ENDS**

**14 May 2019**