

BUNION (AND OTHER PAINFUL TOE CONDITION) SURGICAL TREATMENT POLICY PRIOR APPROVAL

Version:	2425.v3f
Recommendation by:	Somerset ICB Clinical Commissioning Policy Forum (CCPF)
Date Ratified:	July 2022
Name of Originator/Author:	EBI Team
Approved by Responsible Committee/Individual:	Somerset ICB Clinical Executive Committee (CEC)
Publication/issue date:	November 2022
Review date:	Earliest of either NICE publication or 3 years from issue
Target audience:	<p>NHS Somerset ICB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHS Providers • GP Practices • Contracts Team <p>Medical Directors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Somerset Foundation Trust • Yeovil District Hospital NHS FT • Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS FT
Application Form	Bunion Prior Approval Application Form

**BUNION (AND OTHER PAINFUL TOE CONDITION)
SURGICAL TREATMENT PRIOR APPROVAL POLICY**

Section	CONTENTS	Page
	Version Control	1
1	General Principles	3
2	Policy Criteria	3 - 5
3	Background	5
4	Evidence Based Interventions Process	5 - 6
5	Access To Policy	6
6	References	7

VERSION CONTROL

Document Status:	Current policy
Version:	2425.v3f

DOCUMENT CHANGE HISTORY

Version	Date	Comments
1718.v2	July 2017	SFI wording removed
1718.v3	August 2018	Reformatting of layout
1718.v3a	February 2020	Change of policy layout and updates agreed by CCPF December 2019.
1920.v3a	February 2020	Bilateral surgery pathway/toe amputation commissioned/overriding toes specific to bunions/removal of comments re fit for surgery / post-operative care, clarification on wording for patients with diabetes
1920.v3b	July 2022	Amendment from SCCG to NHS Somerset ICB. New PALS email address. Amendment to wording with reference to overriding toes item 2
2223.v3c	November 2022	3-year review and inclusion of wording in policy criteria section 2.6
2223.v3d	March 2023	Wording change 4.5
2223.v3e	June 2024	Logo change with amendment to website link and clinical exceptionality wording on 4.6

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form OR EIA Screening Form completed. Date:	N/A
Quality Impact Assessment QIA. Date:	March 2018
Sponsoring Director:	Bernie Marden
Document Reference:	2425.v3f

1 GENERAL PRINCIPLES (PRIOR APPROVAL)

- 1.1 Funding approval must be secured by primary care/secondary care prior to referring/treating patients for this prior approval treatment
- 1.2 Funding approval must be secured prior to a referral for an assessment/surgery. Referring patients without funding approval 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
- 1.3 On limited occasions, we 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 patient meets the criteria to access treatment in this policy
- 1.4 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
- 1.5 Receiving funding approval does not confirm that they will receive treatment or surgery for a condition as a consent discussion will need to be undertaken with a clinician prior to treatment
- 1.6 The policy does not apply to patients with suspected malignancy who should continue to be referred under 2 week wait pathway rules for assessment and testing as appropriate
- 1.7 Patients with an elevated BMI of 30 or more may experience more post-surgical complications including post-surgical wound infection so should be encouraged to lose weight further prior to seeking surgery.
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1198743X15007193>
(Thelwall, 2015)
- 1.8 Patients who are smokers should be referred to smoking cessation services in order to reduce the risk of surgery and improve healing
- 1.9 Where prior approval funding is secured by the EBI service it will be available for a specified period of time, normally one year

2 POLICY CRITERIA PRIOR APPROVAL

- 2.1 Toe amputation is commissioned and sits outside of this policy.
- 2.2 Urgent referral (<2/52)

- Impending or non-healing skin ulcer
 - Peripheral limb ischaemia
- 2.3 Surgical correction of hallux valgus using minimal access techniques is **NOT routinely commissioned**
- 2.4 **Surgical Foot Treatments (for example: Hammer, Mallet, or Claw Toe) will be authorised where the following criteria are met:**
- a) The referral is NOT being made for cosmetic purposes **AND the patient**
 - b) Has untreated hallux valgus deformity and has diabetes (or another cause of peripheral neuropathy) which puts them at risk of deep infection/amputation **OR**
 - c) Is suffering from severe deformity of overriding toes **OR**
 - d) Has persistent moderate/severe symptoms (covered by the other conditions in the background information section 3) despite **6 months** of conservative management as detailed in 2.5 below
- 2.5 **Conservative management over 6 months**
- a) Modification of footwear: avoidance of high-heeled shoes, wearing wide cut or specially altered shoes with increased medial pocket to minimise deforming forces **AND**
 - b) Externally fitted devices to improve alignment and reduce irritation, e.g., orthoses and bunion pads **AND**
 - c) Stretching exercises to improve/maintain joint flexibility **AND**
 - d) Ice and elevation for pain and swelling **AND**
 - e) Optimum analgesia
- 2.6 Where an original funding authorisation is for a toe and the secondary care clinician determines when seeing the patient that they require further surgery to another toe on the same foot, the provider may undertake the other procedure(s) without seeking further funding authorisation where they fall under all the following conditions.
- The toe fulfils the relevant policy treatment criteria of the NHS Somerset treatment policy
 - The treatment would be undertaken within the same episode of care
 - The medical notes must clearly document how the policy treatment criteria have been met for the surgery of the additional toe
 - Patient consent

- 2.7 The patient is fit for surgery and understands if approved for surgery they will be unable to drive for 6 weeks *(or 2 weeks after surgery on the left foot if they drive an automatic car)*. Also, where applicable, they will be off work for a minimum of two weeks

3 BACKGROUND

Conditions and Treatments included in this policy:

Hallux valgus (often referred to as a bunion) is the deviation of the big toe (the hallux) away from the mid-line towards the lesser toes.

The metatarsal head drifts towards the midline and this together with its overlying bursa and inflamed soft tissue is known as the bunion, which causes pain and rubbing on shoes

Hallux Rigidus (Royal College of Surgeons, 2013)

The development of arthritic changes within the joint causing stiffness, pain and deformity

Hammer Toe (Royal College of Surgeons, 2013)

Hammer toe or contracted toe is a deformity of the proximal interphalangeal joint of the second, third, or fourth toe causing it to be permanently bent, resembling a hammer

Mallet Toe (Royal College of Surgeons, 2013)

A similar condition to hammer toe affecting the distal interphalangeal joint

Claw Toe (Royal College of Surgeons, 2013)

Another similar condition to hammer toe, with dorsiflexion of the proximal phalanx on the lesser metatarsophalangeal joint, combined with flexion of both the proximal and distal interphalangeal joints. Claw toe can affect the second, third, fourth, or fifth toes

It is expected that the vast majority of patients with foot conditions and mild pain will be managed in primary care by providing patients with appropriate practical information on managing their symptoms such as pain relief and footwear modification (lower heels, wider fitting shoes, high toe box)

This advice and conservative treatment must be documented as it will form evidence to support part of the access criteria for this intervention

4 EVIDENCE BASED INTERVENTIONS APPLICATION PROCESS

- 4.1 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

- 4.2 Completion of a **Generic EBI Application Form** by a GP or Consultant may be put forward
- 4.3 Applications cannot be considered from patients personally
- 4.4 Only electronically completed EBI applications will be accepted to the EBI Service
- 4.5 It is expected that clinicians will have ensured that the patient, on behalf of who they are forwarding the application for, is appropriately informed about the existing policies prior to an application to the EBIP. This will reassure the Panel that the patient has a reasonable expectation of the outcome of the application and its context
- 4.6 EBI funding application are considered against clinical exceptionality. To eliminate discrimination for patients, **social, environmental, workplace, and non-clinical personal factors cannot be taken into consideration.**

For further information on 'clinical exceptionality' please refer to the NHS Somerset ICB EBI webpage [Evidence Based Interventions - NHS Somerset ICB](#) and click on the section titled Generic EBI Pathway.

- 4.7 Where appropriate photographic supporting evidence can be forwarded with the application form
- 4.8 An application put forward for consideration must demonstrate some unusual or unique clinical factor about the patient that suggests they are exceptional as defined below:
- Significantly different to the general population of patients with the condition in question:
 - Likely to gain significantly more benefit from the intervention than might be expected from the average patient with the condition

5 ACCESS TO POLICY

- 5.1 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 Telephone number: 08000 851067
- 5.2 **Or write to us:** NHS Somerset ICB, Freepost RRKL-XKSC-ACSG, Yeovil, Somerset, BA22 8HR or **Email** us: somicb.pals@nhs.net

6 REFERENCES

The following sources have been considered when drafting this policy:

- 6.1 National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. (2014, February). Osteoarthritis: care and management. Retrieved from NICE org: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg177>
- 6.2 National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. (2010, February). Surgical correction of hallux valgus using minimal access techniques. Retrieved from NICE Org: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ipg332>
- 6.3 NHS Choices. (2014, October 16). Heel pain. Retrieved from NHS Choices: <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/heel-pain/pages/introduction.aspx>
- 6.4 NHS Choices. (2015, August 20). Morton's neuroma. Retrieved from NHS Choices: <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/mortonsneuroma/pages/introduction.aspx>
- 6.5 British Orthopaedic Association Guidance on Bunions