

## Background

- Since 2013 all Clinical Commissioning Groups, (CCGs), receive funding from NHS England to commission health services for their local population. This enables the CCGs to make decisions within the context of statutes, statutory instruments, regulations and guidance, (“the legal bits”).
- CCGs are expected to seek the greatest health advantage possible for their local populations using the resources allocated to them, whilst required to commission comprehensive, effective, accessible services which are free to patients at the point of entry, (except where there are defined charges), within an agreed budget.
- It is, therefore, necessary to make decisions regarding the investment of resources in clinical procedures that achieve the greatest health gain for the whole population. The Procedures of Low Clinical Value (PoLCV) Policy is designed to help CCGs meet their obligation in providing health access to all.
- Based on local GP clinical input, systematic evaluations, Public Health clinician input and other national organisations, some medical procedures have been identified as being either marginally effective or ineffective with limited clinical value in the clear majority of cases. Other procedures have been shown to be an inefficient use of resource, based on the high cost per limited improved quality of life for the patient.
- Taking all the above into account, 11 CCGs within Staffordshire and the West Midlands have drawn up and commissioned a Policy for Procedures of Low Clinical Value (PoLCV) which can be found on East Staffordshire CCG’s website at:

<http://eaststaffscgg.nhs.uk/publications/policies/clinical/procedures-of-low-clinical-value>

## What does this mean for me, the Patient?

The treatments that are now described as ‘Procedures of Low Clinical Value’ or Effectiveness need to be considered on a case by case basis before they can be provided by the NHS. This means that when you see your GP they must follow the policy guidelines, which they have helped produce. If your condition meets the policy guidelines they may then forward you to a consultant for further investigation or discussion on your condition. In certain situations, your GP may not be able to offer you a certain treatment or consultant referral because it does not meet the criteria laid down within the policy.

Although your GP may feel uncomfortable in explaining this to you, because of the implications for you as an individual, they have a duty to observe the policy because it is the agreed policy of their local CCG, and is the best way to ensure that local NHS funds are spent on the things that will bring greatest overall benefit to local people in a way that is affordable and fair.

In addition, if your doctor does forward you to a consultant, without following the guidelines, then the consultant will be unable to carry out any procedures and would only refer you back to your GP. Naturally this situation causes stress for the patient with a wasted cost to both the patient and the NHS.

Examples of all treatments and applicable exclusions and criteria, which are listed as not being funded under the policy are available from your doctor during initial consultation or by referring to the CCG policy covering Procedures of Low Clinical Value at:

<http://eaststaffscgg.nhs.uk/publications/policies/clinical/procedures-of-low-clinical-value>

Your doctor should be able to provide you with the necessary criteria to the relevant section(s) of the policy document at your initial consultation.



## Are there any exceptions?

Occasionally, in exceptional circumstances, some procedures can be carried out by applying through the Individual Funding Request (IFR) procedure. Further details of which can be found at

<http://sesandspccg.nhs.uk/news-and-information/individual-funding-requests-ifr>

Applications can only be made by the doctor recommending the course of treatment. The doctor will be informed of the outcome and if approved, they will arrange for your treatment in the normal way. If funding is not granted, the reasons will be explained to you.

## What if I am not happy with the decision?

Decisions are based on strict medical criteria and so are usually clear-cut. If you are not happy with the decision you can ask your doctor to apply again with more medical information. The decision is based on medical evidence, so if you submit new evidence your case will be re-examined.

## Your feedback

We welcome any feedback, complaints or compliments on any of the services we commission.

Email: [mlcsu.patientservices@nhs.net](mailto:mlcsu.patientservices@nhs.net)

Tel: **0800 030 4563** (There is also a 24-hour answerphone service)

This leaflet has been updated with input from East Staffordshire CCG's Patient Board.

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Commissioning quality care



**East Staffordshire**  
Clinical Commissioning Group

## Patient Leaflet

### Procedures of Low Clinical Value (PoLCV)

#### A patient's guide to the PoLCV policy and why your doctor must observe it

Some treatments are described as 'Procedures of Low Clinical Value' or 'Effectiveness', and need to be considered on a case by case basis before they can be provided by the NHS.

This patient information leaflet has been produced to explain the purpose of, and reasons behind this policy.

