Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board

27/03/2025

NN-ICB/25-1098

Dear Requestor

Re: Freedom of Information Request

Thank you for your request for information, received on 24 February 2025, regarding the referral criteria/guidance for hip replacements. We have processed your request in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Under the FOIA, public authorities like ours are required to respond to requests for information within 20 working days. In response to your request, I can confirm that we do hold the information requested.

Details of your request:

Can I please make a FOI request for "the referral criteria/guidance for GP's/MSK team to refer in directly to the Orthopaedic service for consideration of a hip replacement".

To be specific – the criteria for GP's to refer in to secondary care, not the funding criteria required that must be met before referral by secondary care for the actual operation itself.

Our response to your request:

Please find attached the MSK Hip Pathway from 2019. The ICB currently use the GIRFT and NICE guidelines, and all MSK referrals to secondary care are triaged for suitability via an MSK interface service before being forwarded to orthopaedics. The clinical 'criteria' are the same as the Value Based Commissioning criteria published on TeamNet and follow NICE guidance as well as GIRFT pathways Orthopaedics-Elective-Primary-Total-Hip-Replacement-Pathway-Nov-2022.pdf

There is an emphasis on shared decision-making and early optimisation for surgery which are prompted in the MSK referrals forms (attached). The decision for surgery is personalised and weighs up risks and benefits using Decision Support Tools NHS_hip_osteoarthritis_decision_tool. GIRFT guidelines states referrals must include (pg10):

MSK practitioners in triage roles in primary and/or community care can refer. Any referral to the Trauma and Orthopaedic department includes:

- medical history;
- nature of non-surgical management attempted;
- detail of pain or functional disability and impact on quality of life;
- confirmation that the patient would be happy to have surgical intervention if deemed necessary;
- knees – weight bearing X-ray within 12 months confirming arthritic diagnosis (standing AP, lateral and

skyline);

• hips – non-weight bearing X-ray within 12 months confirming arthritic diagnosis (AP pelvis, lateral); and

• where appropriate, documentation indicates what interventions are being conducted to optimise patient for surgery

While there are parameters detailed for surgical optimisation, guidance states these are not 'criteria' and people should not be excluded from referral for joint replacement based on co-morbidities etc. The purpose of early optimisation is to prevent delays before surgery. Fitness for surgery decision is made by surgeon and anaesthetic teams on an individual basis.

If you are unhappy with the way in which your request has been handled, NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) has an internal review procedure through which you can raise any concerns you might have. Further details of this procedure can be obtained by contacting Lucy Branson, Director of Corporate Affairs via lucy.branson@nhs.net or by writing to FOI Team at NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire ICB, Sir John Robinson House, Sir John Robinson Way, Arnold, Daybrook, Nottingham NG5 6DA.

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the internal review, you can apply to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), who will consider whether the organisation has complied with its obligations under the Act and can require the organisation to remedy any problems. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire ICB. You can find out more about how to do this, and about the Act in general, on the Information Commissioner's Office website at: https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/

Complaints to the Information Commissioner's Office should be sent to:

FOI/EIR Complaints Resolution, Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Telephone 0303 123 1113 or report a concern via https://ico.org.uk/concerns/

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information (FOI) Officer on behalf of NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board

nnicb-nn.foi@nhs.net

All information we have provided is subject to the provisions of the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015. Accordingly, if the information has been made available for re-use under the Open Government Licence (OGL) a request to re-use is not required, but the license conditions must be met. You must not re-use any previously unreleased information without having the consent of NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board. Should you wish to re-use previously unreleased information then you must make your request in writing (email will suffice) to the FOI Lead via nnicb-nn.foi@nhs.net. All requests for re-use will be responded to within 20 working days of receipt.