Classification: Official

Publication reference: SSC2835

To:
- Midlands Acute Providers
- Medical Directors

cc.
- Provider Chief Executive
- Provider Chief Pharmacist

NHS England
Specialised Commissioning - Midlands
23 Stephenson Street
Birmingham
B2 4BJ

County Hall
Glenfield, Leicester
Leicestershire
LE3 8RA

30 May 2025

Dear Medical Directors,

Use of Blueteq prior approval process for high cost tariff excluded devices.

This letter is to inform trusts and clinical teams of the continued requirement to submit a prior approval application, through the Blueteq process, where specialised commissioning policies ask for this in advance of a device being used. Trust teams should consider this letter as one month's contractual notice of the need to complete the prior approval process before further reimbursement of the cost of relevant devices.

NHS England has published a number of clinical commissioning policies relating to the use of specific high cost devices that are funded outside of tariff. Many of these polices include the requirement for a prior approval application to be made to assure commissioners that the devices are being used in accordance with the published policy criteria. A recent audit shows poor compliance.

A list of the policies which ask for prior approval before use of devices is as follows:

Policy area	Link to
Microproccessor controlled prostheses (knees)	clin-comm-pol-16061P.pdf
Multi grip prosthetic hands	https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/clinical-commissioning-policy-multi-grip-prosthetic-hand-all-ages/
Childrens sports and activity limbs	

Sacral nerve stimulation – Overactive bladder	E10-Sacral-nerve-stimulation-for-overactive-bladder.pdf
Sacral nerve stimulation – faecal incontinence	a08-Sacral nerve stimulation for faecal incontinence-p-b.pdf
Cardiac – Percutaneous Mitral valve leaflet repair	Clinical-Commissioning-Policy_Percutaneous-mitral-valve-leaflet-repair-for-primary-degenerative-mitral-regurgi.pdf (england.nhs.uk)
Cardiac – percutaneous PFO closure	Clinical-Commissioning-Policy_Percutaneous-patent-foraman-ovale-closure-for-the-prevention-of-recurrent-cerebr.pdf (england.nhs.uk)
Cardiac – Percutaneous LAAO	1692-left-atrial-appendage-occlusion.pdf (england.nhs.uk)
Cardiac – TAVI	NHS England » Transcatheter Aortic Valve Implantation (TAVI) and Surgical Aortic Valve Replacement (SAVR) for symptomatic, severe aortic stenosis (adults) to support elective performance
Cardiac procedure – Catheter ablation for atrial fibrillation	Clinical Commissioning Policy: Catheter ablation for paroxysmal and persistent atrial fibrillation (adults) [210601P]

From 1 July 2025, the specialised services device programme team will begin a process of checking for submission of Blueteq applications before agreeing reimbursement of further devices via the Financial Reconciliation Process (FRP) where this is the current route for reimbursement, and the Devices Patient Contract Monitoring (DePLCM) file where devices are not reimbursed through NHS Supply Chain.

Please ensure clinicians considering using devices in relation to the above services are aware of this requirement, and have relevant access and training on use of the Blueteq prior approval software.

Yours sincerely,

Alison Kemp
Interim Regional Director of Specialised Commissioning
NHS England – Midlands Specialised Commissioning

Publication reference: SSC2835