

Breast reduction surgery

NHS Devon

Commissioning policy

Breast reduction surgery is not routinely commissioned in Devon.

This policy does not apply to therapeutic mammoplasty for breast cancer treatment or contralateral (other side) surgery following breast cancer surgery. Under normal circumstances the surgery is commissioned when it is part of an ongoing package of treatment for breast cancer, including where the patient has chosen to defer taking a decision on the surgery. Once the patient has been discharged from this treatment plan further procedures are not routinely commissioned.

Rationale for the decision

The ICB is responsible for ensuring that the treatments provided for the local population represent the best use of the NHS budget allocated to them for their population's health services. The ICB has to choose how to use their funds carefully to ensure that the local population has access to the healthcare that is most needed and that people with equal need have equal opportunity to access treatments.

This inevitably means that difficult decisions need to be made. Unfortunately, some treatment that patients might wish to receive, and that healthcare professionals might wish to offer, cannot be funded or is only offered under certain circumstances. This approach is consistent with other NHS organisations who buy healthcare for their local communities.

This policy has been reached after considering guidance for breast reduction surgery published by NHS England in November 2018. It is expected that the criteria proposed by NHS England would increase the expenditure on breast reduction surgery in Devon by increasing the number of procedures performed. Increasing expenditure on breast reduction surgery is considered to be a low priority for the use of healthcare funds.

Guidance notes on exceptionality

Where the circumstances of treatment for an individual patient do not meet the criteria described above exceptional funding can be sought. Individual cases will be reviewed by the appropriate panel of the ICB upon receipt of a completed application from the patient's GP, consultant or clinician. Applications cannot be considered from patients personally.

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