

Dilatation and curettage for heavy menstrual bleeding in women

NHS Devon

Commissioning policy

Dilatation and curettage (D&C) is not routinely commissioned in Devon for diagnosis or treatment for heavy menstrual bleeding in women.

Ultrasound scans and camera tests, with sampling of the lining of the womb (hysteroscopy and biopsy), can be used to investigate heavy periods. Medication and intrauterine systems (IUS) can be used to treat heavy periods.

Rationale for the decision

Dilatation and curettage (D&C) is a minor surgical procedure where the opening of the womb (cervix) is widened (dilatation) and the lining of the womb is scraped out (curettage).

NHS England Evidence-Based Interventions guidance notes that National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines recommend that D&C is not offered as a treatment option for heavy menstrual bleeding. There is very little evidence to suggest that D&C works to treat heavy periods and the one study identified by NICE showed the effects were only temporary. D&C should not be used to investigate heavy menstrual bleeding as hysteroscopy and biopsy work better. Complications following D&C are rare but include uterine perforation, infection, adhesions (scar tissue) inside the uterus and damage to the cervix.

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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