

**Stakeholder briefing – 1 November 2023**

## **Changes to eight West Yorkshire commissioning policies**

The NHS West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) is reviewing its commissioning policies to make sure everyone gets the same access to treatments, wherever they live in West Yorkshire. Commissioning policies are documents that contain information about treatments, and who can have those treatments paid for by the NHS.

Patient and public involvement around this work took place earlier this year. Please see this page [Your views on treatments paid for by the NHS](#) for more information about the involvement.

At its meeting on 31 October 2023, the ICB Transformation Committee agreed to the following commissioning policy changes for West Yorkshire.

### **Gluten-free prescribing**

Gluten-free prescribing will be stopped in Calderdale and Leeds to bring them in line with the other West Yorkshire places where it was stopped in 2016-17. This does not apply to patients who require low protein gluten-free foods due to [phenylketonuria \(PKU\)](#) for example. The new [commissioning statement for gluten-free prescribing is available to view here](#).

Patients in Calderdale and Leeds who get gluten-free products (bread and flour mixes) on prescription will receive a letter via their GP practices to thank them for taking part in the involvement, update them on the decision and explain the next steps. The letter will also include links to some frequently asked questions, and contact details if patients should have any questions, comments or complaints.

All gluten-free prescriptions will be stopped from 1 April 2024 so patients will have an adjustment period of around five months to find ways to adapt their diets.

Gluten-free prescriptions will not be available for those newly diagnosed with coeliac disease from 1 November 2023.

A wide range of gluten-free products is now readily available in supermarkets, other shops and online. However, the main theme from the patient and public feedback was the cost of these products compared to cheaper, gluten-containing alternatives. Many low-cost foods, including potatoes and rice, are naturally gluten-free so it is possible to follow a gluten-free diet without prescription products.

Local GPs and other healthcare professionals are committed to supporting coeliac patients to be able to follow a gluten-free diet.

## **Six cosmetic procedures carried out for health reasons**

The body mass index (BMI) requirement for six cosmetic procedures carried out for health reasons will be set to 27 or below across West Yorkshire from 1 November 2023. The new commissioning policies for these procedures are available to view at the links below:

- [aesthetic abdominal procedures](#)
- [body contouring](#)
- [breast lift \(mastopexy\)](#)
- [breast procedures](#)
- [breast reduction for male gynaecomastia](#) (enlarged male breasts)
- [liposuction](#)

Achieving a BMI of 27 or below before surgery has a positive effect on different anaesthetic risks, wound healing rates, rates of postoperative infection and the ability for people to get mobile after surgery. A BMI of 27 or below was already the requirement for these procedures in some areas of West Yorkshire whilst for other areas it was set at 30 or below.

The majority of people who shared their views about the BMI for these procedures agreed that it should be set at 27 or below. Most also agreed that having consistency across West Yorkshire is important, as is following clinical evidence.

The new policy will not apply to people who are already on the waiting list for one of these procedures, or to those who are waiting to be assessed following a referral from a GP or other healthcare professional. It will apply to all new referrals.

## Ear correction surgery

The age range for children and young people to access ear correction surgery will be set at 5 to 18 years from 1 November 2023. The age range varied slightly across West Yorkshire so this change removes that variation. It also aligns the policy with other treatments for those aged 18 and under, and with NHS guidance. The new [commissioning policy for ear correction surgery is available to view here](#).

The majority of people who shared their views on ear correction surgery agreed that the age range should be 5 to 18 years.

The new policy will not apply to children and young people who are already on the waiting list for ear correction surgery, or to those who are waiting to be assessed following a referral from a GP or other healthcare professional. It will apply to all new referrals.

## Further information

Demand for NHS services continues to increase and the ICB needs to make sure that funding is used appropriately and fairly across West Yorkshire.

There may be exceptional clinical circumstances where a GP or other healthcare professional believes a patient should have a treatment or a procedure that is no longer routinely available. In such cases, the healthcare professional can ask the NHS to pay for that treatment by completing an [individual funding request](#) on behalf of the patient.

There are some frequently asked questions on this web page [Treatments paid for by the NHS](#) which may be helpful. If people would like to ask a question, or make a comment or complaint about this decision, they can email the ICB Governance Team at: [westyorkshireics.governance@nhs.net](mailto:westyorkshireics.governance@nhs.net) or call: 01924 213050 (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm).