

NHS Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group
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Our Ref: ID 217

Re: Freedom of Information Request

Thank you for your request for information made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 which was received into this office on 22nd June 2015.

You Asked for:

1. According to your current IVF treatment policy:
 - a. How many cycles of IVF do you offer to eligible patients?
 - b. Do you fund a full cycle of IVF, as defined by NICE, which includes replacement of all frozen embryos? If not how many frozen embryo transfers do you fund?
 - c. What is your upper and lower age limit that female patients must meet in order to qualify for treatment?
 - d. Do you fund one full cycle of IVF for women aged 40-42 in line with the NICE guidance?
 - e. Do you have an age criteria that male patients must meet in order to qualify for treatment? If so, please state what the criteria is.
 - f. What must the smoking status of patients be?
 - g. What weight requirement exists (i.e. BMI)?
 - h. How long do couples need to be trying to conceive before becoming eligible for treatment?
 - i. Is there a minimum period that the couple need to have been in a relationship before becoming eligible for treatment?
 - j. What eligibility criteria do you apply in relation to existing children that either one or both partners may have?
 - k. What policy is in place (if any) for the use of Single Embryo Transfer?

- l. Do you fund fertility treatment for same sex couples, and if so what eligibility criteria do they have to fulfill?

For questions A- L please refer to the policy by following this link:

<https://www.wirralccg.nhs.uk/Downloads/AboutUs/Policies/Infertility%20Policy%20%202015.pdf>

- m. Do you fund fertility preservation for cancer patients and if so what budget is the funding taken from?

Yes, Wirral CCG do fund fertility preservation for cancer patients from the budget for Secondary Healthcare

2. What is the average cost of a cycle of an IVF cycle funded by the CCG and what does that include?

The average cost of IVF treatment funded by NHS Wirral CCG is £4,247.00. A cycle is defined as an attempt at ovarian stimulation, egg recovery, fertilisation and embryo transfer and generally is deemed to have commenced at the patients attendance at a Patient Information Event (PIE).

3. What providers does the CCG contract with to provide IVF services?

NHS Wirral CCG patients would primarily use Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust and Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.

4. When was the current assisted conception policy developed? And who was consulted?

There has been a recent commissioning policy review (2014/2015) which involved consultation with primary and secondary care clinicians and members of the public.

5. When will the CCG review its assisted conception policy?

The CC will review its policies together with other CCGs as part of any future review of commissioning policies akin to the 2014/2015 review.

6. Is the assisted conception policy available on the CCG's website? If so please provide a link to the policy.

Yes the policy is available on the CCG website, via the following link –

<https://www.wirralccg.nhs.uk/Downloads/AboutUs/Policies/Infertility%20Policy%20%202015.pdf>

7. Please could you provide me with a copy of your assisted conception policy?

Please see answer to question 6.

8. Which MPs cover the boundaries of the CCG?

Alison McGovern - Wirral South
Frank Field - Birkenhead
Angela Eagle - Wallasey
Margaret Greenwood - Wirral West

9. Has the CCG conducted any financial modeling on the cost implications of funding three full cycles of IVF?

In mid-2013 the Cheshire and Mersey Commissioning Support Unit (now known as North West Commissioning Support Unit) were commissioned to undertake a review of a range of commissioning policies on behalf of the Clinical Commissioning Groups across Cheshire and Merseyside.

The Commissioning Support Unit undertook a thorough review of the commissioning policies including Procedures of Limited Clinical Value and Infertility Policies

This included:

A full evidence review considering NICE guidance and the most up to date Clinical Evidence base (this was supported by Public Health who undertook independent reviews in a number of areas)
Development of draft policies for consultation (including clarification of wording in old documentation;)
Full public consultation across the Cheshire and Merseyside Clinical Commissioning Group area
Equality Impact Assessment of the proposed draft policies
Financial review of the impact of changes to the Infertility policy

The CCG did consider all aspects of the review including the financial impact of the changes, but this was secondary to consideration of NICE guidance in the formulation of this policy.

10. If the CCG does not follow the NICE guideline, have they published the reasons why they do not follow the guideline? If so, what are the reasons for not complying with the NICE guideline?

Please refer to the policy by following this link:

<https://www.wirralccg.nhs.uk/Downloads/AboutUs/Policies/Infertility%20Policy%20%202015.pdf>

11. In the last 12 months, or at the time of the last consultation on the IVF policy, has the CCG considered collaborating with other CCGs on the fertility policy?

The CCG has collaborated with other CCGs since 2006 on its fertility policy.

12. In the last 12 months, how many patients have applied for fertility funding (both successfully and unsuccessfully) through an Individual Funding Request?

17 requests have been received in this period.

13. In the last 12 months, how many women aged between 40-42 has the CCG funded IVF treatment for? What does the CCG estimate this to have cost?

1 request was approved, approximately £4,247.00.

14. I would also like to request permission to re-publish the data provided in a publically accessible document/web-format.

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