

NHS Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group  
Old Market House  
Hamilton Street  
Birkenhead  
Wirral  
CH41 5AL  
Tel: 0151 651 0011

## 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 14<sup>th</sup> July 2016.

### You asked for information regarding IVF Services:

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?

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

**Please note that information regarding IVF / Reproduction Services can be located within the CCG's Procedures of Low Clinical Priority Policy (PLCP) and Infertility Policy. Copies of the most current policies can be located on our website if you use the following links:**

<https://www.wirralccg.nhs.uk/About%20Us/PLCP.htm>

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

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 Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is £4,125. 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 contract with the following providers for IVF services:**

- **Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust**
- **Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust**

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

**In mid-2013, Cheshire and Merseyside Commissioning Support Unit were commissioned to undertake a review of the policy on behalf of the Clinical Commissioning Groups across Cheshire and Merseyside.**

**The Commissioning Support Unit also undertook a thorough review of the Procedures of Low Clinical Priority and Infertility Policy, this has included:**

- **A full evidence review considering NICE guidance and the most up to date Clinical Evidence base. This has been supported by Public Health who have undertaken 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;**
- **A Pan Cheshire and Merseyside Clinical Commissioning group meeting to determine a common position following the outcomes of the Public Consultation.**

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

**The CCG is currently arranging a further review of the procedures of low clinical priority and fertility policy to be conducted by the Commissioning Support Unit on behalf of a number of CCGs in Cheshire and Merseyside.**

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

**Please note that the CCG's current conception policy can be located on our website if you use 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 note that the CCG's current conception policy can be located on our website if you use the following link:**

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

8. Which MPs cover the boundaries of the CCG?

**Frank Field  
Margaret Greenwood  
Alison McGovern  
Angela Eagle**

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

**Please see response to question 5.**

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?

**Not applicable, please see response to question 1.**

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 IVF policy was developed across Cheshire and Merseyside.**

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

**In the last financial year, 21 requests for fertility treatment were received by the Individual Exceptional Funding Request (IEFR) Team.**

**If patients clearly meet the agreed criteria then there is no requirement for requests to come via the IEFR Team, therefore actual numbers may be higher than those reported above.**

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?

**NHS Wirral CCG are unable to provide this information as this could easily identify a patient(s).**

**If patients clearly meet the agreed criteria then there is no requirement for requests to come via the IFR Team, therefore actual numbers may be higher than those reported above.**

14. What advice has the CCG sought concerning the most cost and clinically efficient methods of setting up their tertiary infertility services?

- a. Where was this advice sought from?
- b. When was this advice sought?

**Please note that information regarding tertiary infertility services is a specialised commissioned service by NHS England and I have included their contact information below should you wish to contact them directly:**

**Telephone 0300 311 22 33**

**Email [England.contactus@nhs.net](mailto:England.contactus@nhs.net)**

**NHS England  
PO Box 16738  
REDDITCH  
B87 9PT**

**This service operates Monday to Friday 08:00 – 18:00 hrs, excluding Bank Holiday.**

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

**Please see information at the end of this letter with regards to the re-use of information.**

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