

Programme Title: Clinical Policies

Clinical Policies aim to prevent avoidable harm to patients by only offering treatments on the NHS that are evidence-based, clinically safe and effective, as well as cost effective and a good use of resources.

Cambridgeshire, Peterborough, Bedfordshire, Luton, Milton Keynes and Hertfordshire

Title of policy and version:	Breast – Breast Reduction Surgery Version: v1.0
Commissioning position:	Criteria Based Access
Scope:	<p>Covers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surgical breast reduction for hypertrophy where breast size cause functional problems and conservative management has been tried. <p>Out of Scope:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oncoplastic or reconstructive breast surgery undertaken as part of breast cancer treatment or prevention (routinely funded)
Cohort:	Patients with breast hypertrophy
Other relevant Clinical Policy	Breast - Breast Asymmetry

Treatments routinely funded:	<p>The ICB will fund breast reduction surgery when all of the criteria below are met:</p> <p><u>GP Referral Criteria:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aged 18 years or over AND BMI < 27, stable for at least 12 months AND At least one breast size greater than GG cup AND Breast size causes functional symptoms requiring other treatments (e.g. intractable intertrigo, thoracic backache or kyphosis) AND Where thoracic backache or shoulder girdle discomfort is present: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A professionally fitted bra has been trialled for at least 3 months
-------------------------------------	---

	<p style="text-align: center;">AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A physiotherapy assessment +/- rehab programme and further support have been completed. <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The patient has received a full package of supportive care from their GP (e.g. weight management advice and pain management) <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The patient has been a non-smoker for more than 6 months. <p><u>Surgical Criteria:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned breast reduction is ≥ 500 g per breast or at least 4 cup sizes <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patients are provided with written information on the risks and benefits of surgery <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patients are informed that breast reduction surgery: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increases the risk of surgical complications in smokers ○ May result in permanent loss of lactation

<p>Treatments not funded:</p>	<p>Breast reduction surgery where the above criteria are not fully met.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breast reduction requested primarily for cosmetic or aesthetic reasons, where functional symptoms are not present. • Breast reduction for asymmetry alone, where there is no functional impairment.
--------------------------------------	--

Rationale:

Breast reduction surgery can result in complications including permanent loss of lactation, reduced areolar sensation, bleeding, bruising, and scarring. Conservative measures such as weight loss and professionally fitted bras may reduce symptoms for many patients. Surgery is appropriate where functional symptoms are severe and alternative approaches have not been effective.

IFR Statement Clinical Exceptionality:

Where a patient does not meet the policy criteria or the intervention is not normally funded by the NHS, an application for clinical exceptionality can be considered via the ICB's Individual Funding Request (IFR) Policy and Process.

Coding list:

--

Policy document record:	Breast – Breast Reduction Surgery: Version: v1.0
Ratification date:	1st April 2026
Record of significant change:	v1.0 – New harmonised policy for Central East ICB, based on predecessor ICB policies (C&P, HWE, BLMK).
Planned review date:	TBC

Document Environmental Impact statement:

Neutral environmental impact. Policy to be shared and stored electronically where possible; if printed, use double-sided printing and minimal copies.