Policy: Circumcision

Policy statement

Circumcision on the NHS is not routinely provided for non-therapeutic reasons. Circumcision will only be considered for a small number of therapeutic reasons in line with the guidelines including:

- Phimosis (inability to retract the foreskin due to a narrow prepuceal ring) and paraphimosis (inability to pull forward a retracted foreskin).
- Balanitis Xerotica Obliterans (chronic inflammation leading to a rigid fibrous foreskin).
- Balanoposthitis (recurrent bacterial infection of the prepuce)
- Carcinoma of the penis.

It will not be considered on social or religious grounds on the basis that:

- The DH advises that the legality of male circumcision for religious reasons could be in conflict with the human rights act and current child protection legislation.
- The issue of informed consent when a young child is involved is unclear and complex.
- The risks associated with routine circumcision, such as infection and bleeding outweigh the benefits.
- GMC and BMA guidance reflects society’s disagreement as to whether circumcision is a beneficial, neutral or harmful procedure and recognises the complex issues that arise for doctors when considering whether to circumcise male children for non-therapeutic reasons. Neither the BMA nor GMC take a view as regards the lawfulness or appropriateness of circumcision for non-therapeutic reasons.

Exceptions – to facilitate patient care and hygiene as part of a total care package in those dependent on total care.

Additional information

Patients who are not eligible for treatment under this policy may be considered on an individual basis where their GP or consultant believes there is an exceptional clinical need that warrants deviation from the rule of this policy. Individual cases will be considered by the Low Priority Treatments Panel.

Copies of application forms, information leaflets and the Policy for Individual Funding for Treatments outside Commissioned Services can be found at http://www.kernowccg.nhs.uk/get-info/individual-funding-requests

Providers will not be reimbursed for procedures on patients that do not either meet the criteria or have IFR approval.
References
NHS information - www.nhs.uk/conditions/circumcision/Pages/Introduction.aspx
BMA guidance - The law and ethics of male circumcision - guidance for doctors
12 November 2007
http://www.bma.org.uk/ethics/consent_and_capacity/malecircumcision2006.jsp