Cosmetic Procedures
Patient information leaflet

What is a cosmetic procedure?

The NHS definition of cosmetic procedures includes both cosmetic surgery and non-surgical cosmetic treatments. A cosmetic procedure is one that is carried out by choice and is undertaken for the purpose of improving a person’s physical appearance. This is different to plastic surgery which is surgery to repair and reconstruct damaged skin and tissue where the damage may be the result of disease such as cancer or an injury.

What is the NHS Kernow policy on cosmetic procedures?

The Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) considers cosmetic procedures to be of low priority for funding and therefore does not routinely fund cosmetic treatments. There are some exceptions to this which are outlined in the Policy for Individual Funding for Treatments outside Commissioned Services.

More information about this policy can be found at the CCG: [http://www.kernowccg.nhs.uk](http://www.kernowccg.nhs.uk) (and by following the tabs ‘Get info’ and ‘Individual Funding Requests’)

What treatments are included in this policy?

The policy applies to all cosmetic treatments including:

- Abdominoplasty / apronectomy (tummy tuck)
- Blepharoplasty (eyelid surgery)
- Botox injections for excessive sweating or aging skin on any part of the body or face.
- Breast asymmetry correction
- Breast augmentation
- Breast lift
- Breast reduction
- Male breast reduction
- Brow lift
- Buttock, arm or thigh lift
- Dermabrasion of skin
- Face lift
- Hair grafting for baldness
- Inverted nipple correction
- Laser hair removal
- Laser surgery for avoidance of wearing glasses
Aesthetic genital surgery (labioplasty and vaginoplasty etc)
Liposuction
Orthodontics for adults
Pinnaplasty (correction of bat ears) in adults
Removal of benign moles, naevi, cysts, ganglia, etc surgically or by laser
Rhinoplasty (nose reshaping)
Shave for rhinophyma (bulbous nose)
Scar revision
Split earlobe repair
Tattoo removal
Varicose vein surgery

Please see the full policy for details of any exceptions including exceptions that may be considered by the low priority treatments panel.

**Why does the CCG have this policy?**

CCGs receive a fixed amount of money each year in order to provide health services for all their population. They have a duty not to over-spend. With limited funds not all treatments can be provided by the NHS. The decision to provide one treatment directly reduces the resources available for other treatments and services. Therefore there must be a process of prioritisation based on fairness, clinical need and evidence of health benefit.

Procedures which are done mainly for cosmetic reasons often have limited health benefits. The NHS recognises how important these procedures can be to individuals but must also prioritise funds for treatments that have the greatest benefit to people’s health.

**Who decides on this policy?**

The policy has been agreed in consultation with doctors from general practice, relevant hospital specialities and public health.

**Does the CCG ever fund these procedures?**

There are occasions when a cosmetic treatment may be funded but, in fairness to all people who may want cosmetic treatments, a request will be considered only if

- *The patient is significantly different to the general population of patients with the condition in question*

  **And**

- *The patient is likely to gain significantly more benefit from the intervention than might be normally expected for patients with that condition.*
In this situation the GP or another doctor involved in a person’s care should make an application to the CCG. The case will then be considered by the Low Priority Treatments Panel. Further details can be found in the Policy for Individual Funding for Treatments outside Commissioned Services.

There is also a patient information leaflet entitled ‘Will the NHS fund my Treatment?’ This is available from the CCG.

Please ask if you would like to receive this booklet in large print, Braille, on CD or in any other language.

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