

This document should be used by clinicians to support the health optimisation pathway to ensure patients are fit for surgery.

1. What is the health optimisation pathway?

It is a lifestyle intervention which has been introduced to ensure patients referred for non-urgent or routine surgery receive the best possible clinical outcome from their procedure. The pathway is a lifestyle intervention for patients with a BMI of greater than 35 (or BMI 28+ with comorbidities), for people who smoke, or for people who drink alcohol above the recommended guidelines. This intervention involves a GP recommendation to access a weight management programme or a referral to the local stop smoking, or an alcohol support service. Following discussions with the Trust's clinical lead for pre-op; a list of health criteria which the patient must be compliant with in order to be deemed fit for surgery has been developed. If they fall outside of this criterion they must be optimised in Primary Care.

2. What is the health optimisation pathway?

The health care system has a duty to achieve the best health outcomes for the whole population supported by the CCG. There is strong clinical evidence that a number of risks are associated with surgery related to alcohol consumption, smoking status and a high BMI. Please refer to the policy for further information.

Website: www.easterncheshireccg.nhs.uk

3. What is the health optimisation compliance criterion?

- Patients who are obese (above BMI of 35)
- Patients who are alcohol dependent or drink more than 14 U/week
- Patients who smoke
- Patients with controlled high blood pressure (above target BP <160/100mmHg)

- Patients with a pulse below 45 and 100 beats/min (and a regular rhythm)
- Patients with HbA1c (diabetes only) high blood glucose level (HbA1c greater than 69mmo/L)

Please note a patient can still be referred for an opinion and/ or diagnostic uncertainty.

The pathway applies when making any referral to the following surgical specialties':

- Colorectal
- ENT / Head and Neck
- General Surgery
- Gynaecology
- Hepatobiliary & Pancreatic
- Plastic Surgery
- Orthopaedics (Inc. musculoskeletal)
- Upper GI
- Urology
- Vascular Surgery

4. What exclusions are there to the pathway?

There are a number of exclusions from the pathway, including referrals to surgical specialties which are not listed in question one. Other exclusions include:

- Any urgent or non-routine procedures
- Patients undergoing surgery for cancer (*optimisation can be offered but must not cause delay to surgery*)
- Referral for suspicion of cancer
- Patients with a BMI of 35+ but who have a waist measurement less than 94cm in males of 80cm in females – (*excluded for weight management optimisation only*)
- Patients with severe mental illness, learning disability or significant cognitive impairment (*optimisation can be offered based on clinical judgement, dependent on the individual patient*)
- Referrals for interventions of a diagnostic nature e.g. endoscopy

- Children under 18 years of age
- Frail elderly (as a guide – 3 or more of the following: unintentional weight loss; self-reported exhaustion, weakness (grip strength), slow walking speed, low physical activity *(optimisation can be offered based on clinical judgement, dependent on the individual patient)*)
- Referrals for eye surgery *(optimisation not essential, but may still be a benefit to the patient for lifestyle optimisation for general health)*
- Patients who only use electronic cigarettes will be classified as non-smokers.

5. What if the patient declines the pathway?

If a patient declines referral to lifestyle services, after the increased risks of surgery have been discussed with them, there is the option for informed dissent. This must be recorded within the referral proforma. If a patient declines the optimisation pathway, the GP must consider the likelihood that the referral will result in surgery and if so, should advise that following referral, the consultant may delay the procedure until it is safe to operate.

6. What if the referral is for an opinion or diagnostic uncertainty?

Patients can still be referred for an opinion due to diagnostic uncertainty through the usual channels. However, you will be expected to optimise your patient through lifestyle referrals i.e. weight management / stop smoking service / and/ or alcohol reduction service.

7. How should a referral be made to a surgical specialty?

A referral template has been developed for GP clinical systems; this template will highlight the criteria and should be used when referring a patient after receiving a validation code from the PLCP tool.

The template will guide clinicians as to whether the patient is suitable for the health optimisation pathway. It will also facilitate evaluation of the pathway.

A flow chart of the pathway sits within the health optimisation policy has been developed, and this has been shared with GP practices.

8. What happens to the referral while the patient is the optimisation pathway?

The referral should still be made to surgery through the usual channels at the same point the optimisation intervention is initiated.

The referral will then be processed as usual.

9. What support is available to help people who smoke?

Patients can be advised to contact the OneYou stop smoking service. The service will then arrange for the patient to speak to a trained practitioner, plus the latest advice and voucher or prescription* for stop smoking medications such as Nicotine Replacement Therapies.

*prescription charge is payable unless the patient is exempt.

The service also supports patients who are pregnant, or have mental health difficulties through their OneYou Kickstart Specialist Service. The patient can also access an NHS Smokefree App which is downloadable from the OneYou website. The app includes texts and email support alongside a 4 week stop smoking programme.

Free phone: 0800 085 8818

Email: info@oneyoucheshireeast.org

Website: www.oneyoucheshireeast.org

10. What support is available to help people to get fit / lose weight?

A range of healthy weight programmes from eating well, to moving more are provided locally by Cheshire East Council's

commissioned 'OneYou' service. The service offers 6 week nutrition and cookery courses, as well as a 12 week weight management programme whereby the patient would access to nutritional educational classes and a weekly leisure centre pass.

The patient can also access a OneYou Active 10 Walking Tracker App, OneYou Couch to 5K App and OneYou Easy Meals App, all downloadable from their website

Free phone: 0808 1643 202

Email: info@oneyoucheshireeast.org

Website: www.oneyoucheshireeast.org

Patients with an unhealthy BMI of over 40 should be referred directly in to Dietetics', but can also be advised of the above advice and mobile apps available from the OneYou service.

11. What alcohol reduction support is available?

Cheshire East Council's commissioned 'OneYou' service has put together tips, advice and guidance which are accessible via their website, including a Drinks Tracker App which is downloadable from their website. For more information on where to locate support the patient can contact them on the following number;

Free phone: 0800 085 8818

Website: www.oneyoucheshireeast.org

12. What happens at the end of the health optimisation period?

The patient will continue to receive treatment as per the usual referral channels for non-urgent or routine surgical procedures. The referral will already be in the system and they will receive a preoperative assessment as normal.

13. How will the new EMIS proforma work?

The new EMIS proforma will enable the GP to populate and code the information. The OneYou Lifestyle

referral will then need to be completed, ensuring to tick that the referral is specific to health optimisation and sent to;

Email: EBHealthy@everybody.org.uk

14. If a patient has concerns about the new pathway, who should they contact?

Concerns should be discussed with their GP or Secondary Care Clinician in the first instance. Should patients wish to feedback to the CCG regarding the policy, this can be done by;

Phone: 01625 663 864

Email: ecccg.generalenquiries@nhs.net

or palsnhseasterncheshire@nhs.net

Websitewww.easterncheshireccg.nhs.uk

ECCCG Address:

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 New Alderley Building,
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