

## Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board Priorities Committee

<b>Policy title</b>	<b>Policy 57: Removal of benign skin lesions</b>
<b>Policy position</b>	<b>Criteria Based Access</b>
<b>Date of issue</b>	April 2023
<b>Update</b>	This policy will be updated in light of a substantial body of new evidence or new national guidance.

The committee reviewed evidence and sought responses from a wide range of clinicians and obtained an evidence review as well as taking due regard of the statement from the NHS England Evidence Based Interventions<sup>1</sup> statement on benign skin lesions.

The committee were keen to note that this policy is for benign skin lesions and potentially malignant or premalignant lesions are outside the scope of this review. Please consider if the lesion could be a sarcoma, which should be referred through 2WW, before referring through benign route. Patients scoring 3 or more on the following scale should be referred via the 2WW pathway:

Major features of the lesions (scoring 2 points each):

- change in size
- irregular shape
- irregular colour.

Minor features of the lesions (scoring 1 point each):

- largest diameter 7 mm or more
- inflammation
- oozing
- change in sensation.

Lipomas in a sub-fascial position, with rapid growth and/or pain should be referred to the sarcoma clinic. Size has not been found to be a reliable predictor of malignancy.

Removal of benign skin lesions should not be offered for cosmetic reasons. Removal of a benign skin lesion should only be offered in situations where the lesion is causing symptoms according to the criteria outlined below. This is due to the risks of treatment outweighing benefit in most cases. Risks from the procedure can include bleeding, pain, infection, and scarring.

Benign skin lesions must meet at least ONE of the following criteria for NHS funding to be approved for removal and all reasonable conservative management including self-care advice must have been attempted before the offer of surgery:

- The lesion is unavoidably and significantly traumatised on a regular basis. An example of evidence supporting this is the trauma results in infections such that the patient requires 2 or more courses of antibiotics (oral or intravenous) per year;
- The lesion causes regular pain which affects or limits daily activities and/or functioning;
- The lesion is obstructing an orifice or impairing field vision to the extent that the person does not meet DVLA standards for driving;
- The lesion significantly impacts on function and causes a reduction in their activities of daily living using a recognised scoring measure such as the Barthel ADL Score or EuroQol which is likely to improve after intervention;
- The lesion causes pressure symptoms such as on a nerve;
- If left untreated, more invasive intervention would be required for removal;

## References

1 – NHS England Evidence Based Interventions Guidance for CCGs (2019).  
<https://www.aomrc.org.uk/ebi/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/ebi-statutory-guidance.pdf>

## Coding

### OPCS

S063 - Shave excision of lesion of skin of head or neck  
 S064 - Shave excision of lesion of skin NEC  
 S065 - Excision of lesion of skin of head or neck NEC  
 S066 - Re-excision of skin margins of head or neck  
 S067 - Re-excision of skin margins NEC  
 S068 - Other specified other excision of lesion of skin  
 S069 - Unspecified other excision of lesion of skin  
 S081 - Curettage and cauterisation of lesion of skin of head or neck  
 S082 - Curettage and cauterisation of lesion of skin NEC  
 S083 - Curettage of lesion of skin of head or neck NEC  
 S088 - Other specified curettage of lesion of skin  
 S089 - Unspecified curettage of lesion of skin  
 S091 - Laser destruction of lesion of skin of head or neck  
 S092 - Laser destruction of lesion of skin NEC  
 S093 - Photodestruction of lesion of skin of head or neck NEC  
 S094 - Infrared photocoagulation of lesion of skin of head or neck  
 S095 - Infrared photocoagulation of lesion of skin NEC  
 S098 - Other specified photodestruction of lesion of skin  
 S099 - Unspecified photodestruction of lesion of skin  
 S101 - Cauterisation of lesion of skin of head or neck NEC  
 S102 - Cryotherapy to lesion of skin of head or neck  
 S111 - Cauterisation of lesion of skin NEC  
 S112 - Cryotherapy to lesion of skin NEC  
 D021 - Excision of lesion of external ear  
 D022 - Destruction of lesion of external ear  
 D028 - Other specified extirpation of lesion of external ear  
 D029 - Unspecified extirpation of lesion of external ear

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Reason for change</b>
Version 1	Aug 2019	
Version 2	Agreed July 2022 (Ratified by the Board – January 2023)	Policy review as part of the three yearly update programme. Clarification of terminology. The update provides guidance to GPs in differentiating between benign lesions and sarcomas as per NICE guidance.