

Template Policy

Template Policy:	2013-01: In vitro fertilisation (IVF), with or without intra-cytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI)
Issue Date:	October 2015
Review Date:	October 2017
<p>Recommendation:</p> <p>The Brighton & Hove Assisted Reproductive Technologies Policy & Commissioning Group (ARTPCG) has considered up to date information on current guidance and legislation, a review of the literature, an assessment of the baseline position, views and opinions of stakeholders, equality assessment, and the impact of policy changes on patients and the wider population. Taking these into account, the Group recommends that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligible couples requiring IVF, with or without ICSI, will have available to them a maximum of four embryo transfers including no more than two transfers from fresh cycles • In order to access NHS funded IVF, with or without ICSI, patients will be required to fulfill all eligibility criteria set out in <i>Template Criteria for NHS Funded Assisted Reproductive Technologies</i> (BHCCG, 2015) <p>See overleaf for details of supporting evidence and rationale.</p> <p>NHS Brighton & Hove Clinical Commissioning Group will always consider appropriate individual funding requests (IFRs) through its IFR process.</p>	

Supporting documents

KMCS Health Policy Support Unit (2013) *Assisted reproductive technologies – Final report*

KMCS Health Policy Support Unit (2013) *Template Criteria for NHS Funded Assisted Reproductive Technologies- Amended by BHCCG 2015*

NICE (2013) *Clinical guideline 156 – Fertility: Assessment and treatment for people with fertility problems*, Online: <http://www.nice.org.uk/cg156>

Key findings and rationale

What is in vitro fertilisation (IVF)?

During IVF, eggs are removed from the woman's ovaries and fertilised with sperm in a dish. The best one or two embryos that are created are then placed in the woman's womb a few days later. If there are a number of unused good quality embryos left following a treatment cycle, these may be cryopreserved (frozen) for use in later cycles, called frozen embryo transfers.

What is intra-cytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI)?

The procedure for ICSI is similar to that for IVF, but instead of fertilisation taking place in a dish, the embryologist selects sperm from the sample and a single sperm is injected directly into each egg. The fertilised egg (embryo) is then transferred to the woman's womb. The development of ICSI means that as long as some sperm can be obtained (even in very low numbers), fertilisation is possible.

What are the indications for IVF/ICSI?

IVF may be an option for a range of patients including women with blocked fallopian tubes and those with unexplained infertility, mild endometriosis, and mild male factor infertility for whom expectant management has not resulted in natural conception. Indications for ICSI include severe deficits in semen quality, azoospermia, and failed or very poor fertilisation during previous IVF cycles.

What national guidance exists on fertility?

In February 2013 NICE issued Clinical Guideline 156 (CG156), *Fertility: assessment and treatment for people with fertility problems*. This replaces Clinical Guideline 11 (CG11), which was issued in February 2004. The aim of updating NICE guidelines was to revise recommendations on selected topics in the light of new evidence and, where appropriate, make new recommendations. In addition, the scope of CG156 was wider in terms of the patient groups considered.

What does NICE currently recommend with regard to NHS provision of IVF/ICSI?

NICE CG156 recommends that eligible women aged under 40 years should be offered 3 full cycles of IVF, with or without ICSI. NICE define a full cycle of IVF treatment as comprising one episode of ovarian stimulation and the transfer of any resultant fresh and frozen embryo(s).

Why are three full cycles of IVF/ICSI not available on the NHS for Brighton & Hove patients?

When making resource allocation decisions in this context, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) need to take into account the needs of the populations suitable for assisted reproductive technologies, and their wider population. NHS Brighton & Hove CCG has concluded that extending provision of IVF/ICSI to three full cycles for eligible couples is currently unaffordable in the context of local priorities.

What are the eligibility criteria for access to IVF/ICSI?

In order to access NHS funded IVF, with or without ICSI, patients will be required to fulfil all eligibility criteria set out in *Template Criteria for NHS Funded Assisted Reproductive Technologies* (KMCS HPSU, 2013).

Why are eligibility criteria in place for access to assisted reproductive technologies?

Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) have put in place eligibility criteria for access to assisted reproductive technologies in order to focus resources on groups of patients most likely to have successful outcomes, and prioritise groups of patients who are most likely to have the greatest need.