NHS
Cheshire and Merseyside

Clinical Commissioning Policy

Trigger Finger release in adults

Category 2 Intervention - Only routinely commissioned when specific criteria are met -

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Purpose	This document is part of a suite of policies that the Integrated Care Board (ICB) uses to drive its commissioning of healthcare. Each policy in that suite is a separate public document in its own right but will be applied with reference to other policies in that suite.
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Document control:		
Date:	**Version Number:**	**Section and Description of Change**
April 2023	1	Policy ratified by Cheshire & Merseyside ICB

1. Introduction

1.1 This policy relates to the commissioning of interventions which optimise clinical effectiveness and represent value for money.

1.2 This document is part of a suite of policies which the Integrated Care Board (ICB) uses to drive its commissioning of healthcare. Each policy is a separate public document in its own right but should be considered alongside all the other policies in the suite as well as the core principles outlined in Appendix 1.

1.3 At the time of publication, the evidence presented per procedure/treatment was the most current available.

1.4 This policy is based on NHS England's Evidence-Based Interventions (EBI) recommendations see link to programme below - accurate at the point of publication https://www.aomrc.org.uk/ebi/clinicians/trigger-finger-release-in-adults/.

2. Purpose

2.1 This policy aims to ensure a common set of criteria for treatments and procedures across the region. This is intended to reduce variation of access to NHS services in different areas and allow fair and equitable treatment for all patients.

3. Summary of intervention

3.1 Trigger digit occurs when the tendons which bend the thumb/finger into the palm intermittently jam in the tight tunnel (flexor sheath) through which they run. It may occur in one or several fingers and causes the finger to "lock" in the palm of the hand. Mild triggering is a nuisance and causes infrequent locking episodes. Other cases cause pain and loss and unreliability of hand function. Mild cases require no treatment and may resolve spontaneously.

4. Policy statement

4.1 **Mild cases** which cause no loss of function require no treatment or avoidance of activities which precipitate triggering and may resolve spontaneously.

4.2 **Cases interfering with activities or causing pain** should first be treated with:

4.2.1 one or two steroid injections which are typically successful (strong evidence), but the problem may recur, especially in people with diabetes

OR

4.2.2 splinting of the affected finger for 3-12 weeks (weak evidence).

4.3 **Surgery** is routinely commissioned if:

4.3.1 the triggering persists or recurs after one of the above measures (particularly steroid injections)

OR

4.3.2 the finger is permanently locked in the palm

OR

4.3.3 the patient has previously had 2 other trigger digits unsuccessfully treated with appropriate nonoperative methods

OR

4.3.4 people with diabetes.

5. Exclusions

5.1 None

6. Rationale

6.1 Surgery is usually effective and requires a small skin incision in the palm but can be done with a needle through a puncture wound (percutaneous release).

6.2 Treatment with steroid injections usually resolve troublesome trigger fingers within 1 week *(strong evidence)* but sometimes the triggering keeps recurring. Surgery is normally successful (strong evidence), provides better outcomes than a single steroid injection at 1 year and usually provides a permanent cure. Recovery after surgery takes 2-4 weeks. Problems sometimes occur after surgery, but these are rare (<3%).

7. Underpinning evidence

7.1 NHS information, Trigger finger: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/trigger-finger/treatment/

7.2 Amirfeyz R, McNinch R, Watts A, Rodrigues J, Davis TRC, Glassey N, Bullock J. Evidence-based management of adult trigger digits. J Hand Surg Eur Vol. 2017 Jun;42(5):473-480. doi: 10.1177/1753193416682917. Epub 2016 Dec 21.

7.3 British Society for Surgery of the Hand Evidence for Surgical Treatment (BEST) (2016) Evidence based management of adult trigger digits. BEST

7.4 Chang CJ, Chang SP, Kao LT, Tai TW, Jou IM. A meta-analysis of corticosteroid injection for trigger digits among patients with diabetes. 2018, 41: e8-e14.

7.5 Everding NG, Bishop GB, Belyea CM, Soong MC. Risk factors for complications of open trigger finger Hand (N Y). 2015, 10: 297-300.

7.6 Fiorini HJ, Tamaoki MJ, Lenza M, Gomes Dos Santos JB, Faloppa F, Belloti Surgery for trigger finger. Cochrane Database Syst Rev. 2018 Feb 20;2:CD009860. doi: 10.1002/14651858.CD009860.pub2. Review.

7.7 Hansen RL, Sondergaard M, Lange J. Open Surgery Versus Ultrasound- Guided Corticosteroid Injection for Trigger Finger: A Randomized Controlled Trial With 1-Year Follow-up. J Hand Surg 2017;42(5):359-66.

7.8 Lunsford D, Valdes K, Hengy S. Conservative management of trigger finger: A systematic J Hand Ther. 2017.

7.9 Peters-Veluthamaningal C, Winters JC, Groenier KH, Jong BM. Corticosteroid injections effective for trigger finger in adults in general practice: a double-blinded randomised placebo controlled Ann Rheum Dis. 2008 Sep;67(9):1262-6. Epub 2008 Jan 7.

8. Force

8.1 This policy remains in force until it is superseded by a revised policy or by mandatory NICE guidance or other national directive relating to this intervention, or to alternative treatments for the same condition.

9. Coding

SQL code

```
WHEN der.Spell_Dominant_Procedure IN
('T692+HAND','T691+HAND','T698+HAND','T699+HAND','T701+HAND','T702+HAND','T718
+HAND','T719+HAND','T723+HAND','T728+HAND','T729+HAND','T711+HAND')
AND (ISNULL(APCS.Age_At_Start_of_Spell_SUS,APCS.Der_Age_at_CDS_Activity_Date)
between 19 AND 120) AND der.Spell_Primary_Diagnosis like '%M653%'
AND APCS.Admission_Method not like ('2%')
THEN 'P_trigger_fing'
```

Global cancer exclusion

```
APC
WHERE 1=1
-- Cancer Diagnosis Exclusion
AND (apcs.der_diagnosis_all not like '%C[0-9][0-9]%'
AND apcs.der_diagnosis_all not like '%D0%'
AND apcs.der_diagnosis_all not like '%D3[789]%'
AND apcs.der_diagnosis_all not like '%D4[012345678]%'
OR apcs.der_diagnosis_all IS NULL)
```

10. Monitoring And Review

10.1 This policy may be subject to continued monitoring using a mix of the following approaches:

- Prior approval process
- Post activity monitoring through routine data
- Post activity monitoring through case note audits

10.2 This policy will be kept under regular review, to ensure that it reflects developments in the evidence base regarding effectiveness and value.

11. Quality and Equality Analysis

11.1 Quality and Equality Impact Analyses have been undertaken for this policy at the time of its review.

Appendix - Core Objectives and Principles

Objectives

The main objective for having healthcare commissioning policies is to ensure that:

- Patients receive appropriate health treatments
- Treatments with no or a very limited evidence base are not used; and
- Treatments with minimal health gain are restricted.

Principles

This policy aims to ensure a common set of criteria for treatments and procedures across the region. This is intended to reduce variation of access to NHS services in different areas and allow fair and equitable treatment for all patients.

Commissioning decisions by ICB Commissioners are made in accordance with the commissioning principles set out as follows:

- Commissioners require clear evidence of clinical effectiveness before NHS resources are invested in the treatment.
- Commissioners require clear evidence of cost effectiveness before NHS resources are invested in the treatment.
- Commissioners will consider the extent to which the individual or patient group will gain a benefit from the treatment.
- Commissioners will balance the needs of an individual patient against the benefit which could be gained by alternative investment possibilities to meet the needs of the community.
- Commissioners will consider all relevant national standards and consider all proper and authoritative guidance.
- Where a treatment is approved Commissioners will respect patient choice as to where a treatment is delivered, in accordance with the 'NHS Choice' framework.
- Commissioning decisions will give 'due regard' to promote equality and uphold human rights. Decision making will follow robust procedures to ensure that decisions are fair and are made within legislative frameworks.

Core Eligibility Criteria

There are a number of circumstances where a patient may meet a 'core eligibility criterion' which means they are eligible to be referred for the procedures and treatments listed, regardless of whether they meet the criteria; or the procedure or treatment is not routinely commissioned.

These core clinical eligibility criteria are as follows:

- Any patient who needs 'urgent' treatment will always be treated.
- All NICE Technology Appraisals Guidance (TAG), for patients that meet all the eligible criteria listed in a NICE TAG will receive treatment.
- In cancer care (including but not limited to skin, head and neck, breast and sarcoma) any lesion that has features suspicious of malignancy, must be referred to an appropriate specialist for urgent assessment under the 2-week rule.
- NOTE: Funding for all solid and haematological cancers are now the responsibility of NHS England.
- Reconstructive surgery post cancer or trauma including burns.
- Congenital deformities: Operations on congenital anomalies of the face and skull are usually routinely commissioned by the NHS. Some conditions are considered highly specialised and are commissioned in the UK through the National Specialised Commissioning Advisory Group (NSCAG). As the incidence of some cranio-facial congenital anomalies is small and the treatment complex, specialised teams, working in designated centres and subject to national audit, should carry out such procedures.
- Tissue degenerative conditions requiring reconstruction and/or restoring function e.g. leg ulcers, dehisced surgical wounds, necrotising fasciitis.
- For patients wishing to undergo Gender reassignment, this is the responsibility of NHS England and patients should be referred to a Gender Identity Clinic (GIC) as outlined in the Interim NHS England Gender Dysphoria Protocol and Guideline 2013/14.

Cosmetic Surgery

Cosmetic surgery is often carried out to change a person's appearance to achieve what a person perceives to be a more desirable look.

Cosmetic surgery/treatments are regarded as procedures of low clinical priority and therefore not routinely commissioned by the ICB Commissioner.

A summary of Cosmetic Surgery is provided by NHS Choices. Weblink:
http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Cosmetic-surgery/Pages/Introduction.aspx and
http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Cosmetic-surgery/Pages/Procedures.aspx

Diagnostic Procedures

Diagnostic procedures to be performed with the sole purpose of determining whether or not a restricted procedure is feasible should not be carried out unless the eligibility criteria are met, or approval has been given by the ICB or GP (as set out in the approval process of the patients responsible ICB) or as agreed by the IFR Panel as a clinically exceptional case.

Where a General Practitioner/Optometrist/Dentist requests only an opinion the patient should not be placed on a waiting list or treated, but the opinion given and the patient returned to the care of the General Practitioner/Optometrist/Dentist, in order for them to make a decision on future treatment.

Clinical Trials

The ICB will not fund continuation of treatment commenced as part of a clinical trial. This is in line with the Medicines for Human Use (Clinical Trials) Regulations 2004 and the Declaration of Helsinki which stipulates that the responsibility for ensuring a clear exit strategy from a trial, and that those benefiting from treatment will have ongoing access to it, lies with those conducting the trial. This responsibility lies with the trial initiators indefinitely.

Clinical Exceptionality

If any patients are excluded from this policy, for whatever reason, the clinician has the option to make an application for clinical exceptionality. However, the clinician must make a robust case to the Panel to confirm their patient is distinct from all the other patients who might be excluded from the designated policy.

The ICB will consider clinical exceptions to this policy in accordance with the Individual Funding Request (IFR) Governance Framework consisting of: IFR Decision Making Policy; and IFR Management Policy.