

Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Priorities Forum Statement

Number: 15
SUBJECT: Penile Prosthesis for Erectile Dysfunction
Date of decision: December 2011
Date of review: December 2013

Guidance

Implantable penile prostheses have been developed as a treatment option for erectile dysfunction. They can be divided into two general types: inflatable and malleable / semi-rigid rod prostheses.

Inflatable prostheses can provide closer to normal flaccidity and erection, but require longer operative time and have greater potential for device failure. Malleable prostheses leave the penis in an erect state and so concealment may be a problem. They are easier to use for patients with reduced manual dexterity.

The data available on outcomes of penile implant surgery comes from case series reports. While patient and partner satisfaction has been reported as good, important complications include infection, erosion and mechanical failure. The need for surgical revision was high in some studies.

Implantation of a penile prosthesis causes damage to the structure of the penis and is highly likely to reduce the effectiveness of other therapies if the device is removed.

Recommendation

In view of the risk of complications and potential irreversibility of the procedure, implantation of a penile prosthesis is a last-line treatment option. Prostheses should only be contemplated when all other appropriate treatment options have failed. The surgeon must consider that the patient will benefit and the patient should be fully informed of risks, both clinical and psychological.

Surgery should only be carried out at specialist tertiary centres which collect and publishes outcome data and post-operative complications of any cases performed (seek advice from specialist commissioning).

The Human Rights Act has been considered in the formation of this guidance statement.