

SHIP8 Clinical Commissioning Groups Priorities Committee

Policy Recommendation 014: Subacromial decompression of the shoulder

Date of issue: June 2016

The Priorities Committee has reviewed the evidence for clinical and cost effectiveness of surgical interventions for subacromial decompression of the shoulder and recommends that:

- Open subacromial decompression alone is low priority.
- Prior approval for arthroscopic subacromial decompression will be considered as a treatment option for people if all the following criteria are fulfilled:
 - The person has had symptoms for at least 6 months.
 - Symptoms are intrusive and debilitating (for example waking several times a night, pain when putting on a coat).
 - The person has been compliant with a physio intervention for at least 6 weeks.
 - The person has had a positive response to a steroid injection.

The procedure will be performed as a day case if clinically reasonable.

Supporting Information

- The RCS Commissioning Guide for subacromial shoulder pain recommends management of rotator cuff tendinopathy/ impingement should include conservative measures such as education, rest, NSAIDs and simple analgesia, physiotherapy and corticosteroid injection.
- The reviews concluded that surgery was not found to be more effective than active exercises on reducing pain intensity caused by shoulder impingement. Equal effectiveness was found for supervised exercises compared to surgery in the long term and for home exercises compared to combined physiotherapy interventions in the short and long term. Exercise and surgery were found to be more effective than no intervention.
- There is a consensus in the evidence that conservative treatments should be tried before surgery.
- There are several systematic reviews which considered the type of surgical approach for Shoulder Impingement Syndrome (SIS). A meta-analysis carried out in 2010 concluded that arthroscopic and open surgery have equivalent ultimate clinical outcomes, operative times and low complication rates, but arthroscopic surgery results in faster return to work and fewer hospital inpatient days.

Activity

- Rates of activity appear to have fallen in the SE of the patch and the Isle of Wight but have risen in NE Hants & Farnham and West Hampshire CCG areas. Total spend across SHIP in 2014/15 was £3.9m up from £3.7m the previous year. This was forecast to rise further to £3.86m in 2015/16. More locally there are both upward and downward trends.