

## Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Priorities Forum Statement

Number: 43

Subject: Video capsule endoscopy and balloon enteroscopy

Date: November 2016

Date due for review: November 2019

### Guidance

**Video capsule endoscopy (VCE)** – also known as wireless capsule endoscopy – enables imaging of the entire small bowel using a video capsule which is swallowed by the patient. **Balloon enteroscopy (BE)** - including single-balloon enteroscopy and double-balloon enteroscopy - allows deep intubation of the small bowel. BE allows real-time visualisation and can be used to perform endoscopic therapy but it is a more invasive technique which requires sedation or general anaesthetic.

### OPCS Codes

G802 Wireless capsule endoscopy

G803 Diagnostic endoscopic balloon examination of ileum

**Video capsule endoscopy should normally only be funded where investigation of the small bowel is indicated and where conventional endoscopy<sup>1</sup> has not been successful in identifying the problem.**

**Balloon enteroscopy should normally only be funded where further investigation and/or treatment of the small bowel is indicated after video capsule endoscopy or cross-sectional imaging (i.e. CT or MRI).**

Specific indications for the use of VCE/BE are:

1. *Obscure gastrointestinal bleeding (OGIB)*, defined as bleeding of unknown origin that persists or recurs after a negative initial (upper and lower) endoscopy [1]
2. *Iron-deficiency anaemia*, defined as reduced concentrations of haemoglobin (Hb <12 g/dl in males and <11 g/dl in females) and ferritin (<15 micrograms/L)
3. *Crohn's disease* (suspected or known)
4. *Small bowel tumours*
5. *Inherited polyposis syndromes*
6. *Celiac disease*

### Recommended utilisation:

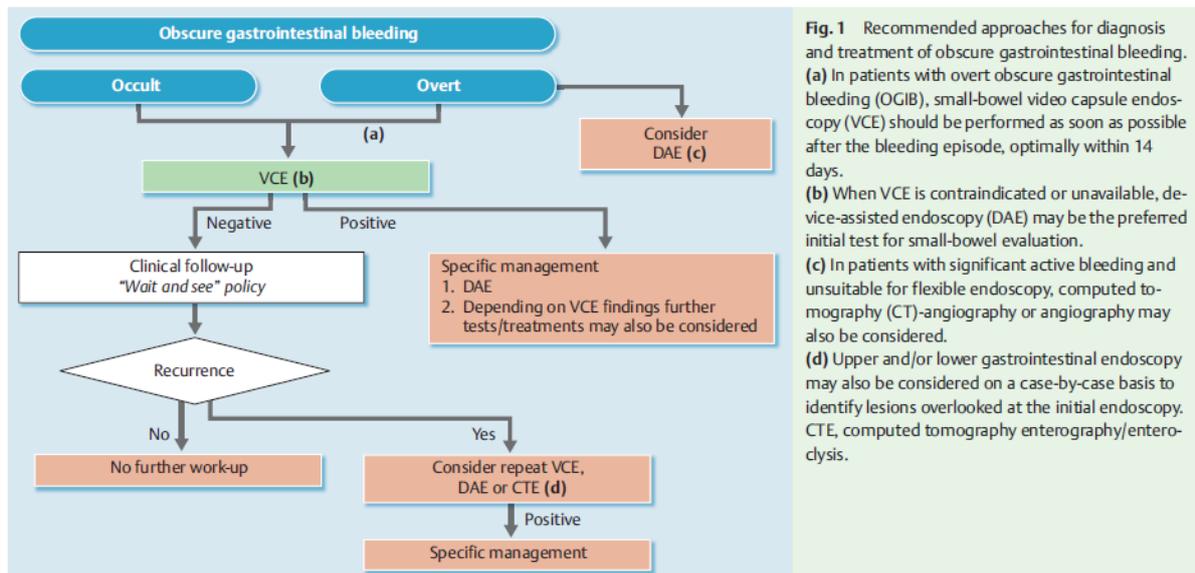
- In OGIB and iron-deficiency anaemia, where bleeding is occult and the condition is unresponsive to medical treatment (i.e. iron supplementation for three months) and upper and lower gastrointestinal endoscopies are inconclusive, VCE is recommended for initial investigation with BE to be considered for follow up if necessary. In OGIB cases with overt (visible) bleeding or in patients unable to tolerate iron therapy, VCE may be considered earlier. See Figure 1 for more detail.
- Follow-up after VCE in OGIB patients: negative small-bowel VCE results should normally be followed by conservative management since re-bleed rates are low in this group; in those with positive small-bowel VCE results, further investigation and treatment may include BE. See Figure 1 for more detail on the recommended approach.

---

<sup>1</sup> Colonoscopy and/or upper gastrointestinal endoscopy

- It is not recommended to perform 'second-look endoscopy' routinely before VCE [2], although for both OGIB and iron-deficiency anaemia, the decision to perform second-look endoscopy before VCE should be made on a case-by-case basis.
- In patients with suspected Crohn's disease, the recommended first line of diagnostic endoscopic examination is ileocolonoscopy. VCE is recommended as the next line of diagnostic investigation, where ileocolonoscopy is inconclusive. BE may be used to follow up positive VCE results or where endotherapy is indicated.
- Early use of VCE is recommended in the search for small bowel tumours when OGIB and iron-deficiency anaemia are not explained otherwise. BE may be used as a follow-up [2] if imaging tests have already shown suspicion of small-bowel tumour.
- Inherited polyposis syndromes: In familial adenomatous polyposis, surveillance is best performed using conventional endoscopes. Use of VCE or BE may be considered where further small-bowel investigation is shown to be clinically indicated.
- Capsule endoscopy should not normally be used for suspected coeliac disease. However, in cases of nonresponsive or refractory coeliac disease (i.e. where signs and symptoms persist after 6 months of a gluten-free diet), VCE should be used for initial investigation and may be followed up by BE where VCE shows abnormalities which need further investigation.
- Patient or clinician preference is not an indication for the use of VCE.

**Figure 1. Recommended approaches for diagnosis and treatment of obscure gastrointestinal bleeding**



Source: [2]

NB. Device assisted enteroscopy (DAE) in this diagram is a generic term which includes balloon enteroscopy.

## References

- [1] NICE, "Wireless capsule endoscopy for investigation of the small bowel," National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, 2004.
- [2] Pennazio, M, C. Spada, R. Eliakim, M. Keuchel, A. May, C. Mulder, E. Rondonotti, S. Adler, J. Albert and et al, "Small-bowel capsule endoscopy and device-assisted enteroscopy for diagnosis and treatment of small-bowel disorders: European Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy (ESGE) Clinical Guideline," *Endoscopy*, vol. 47, pp. 352 - 376, 2015.

**Human Rights and equalities legislation has been considered in the formation of this policy statement.**