

# COMMISSIONING POLICY

## Diagnostic Arthroscopy of the Knee Joint

April 2011

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## **SUMMARY**

Birmingham & Solihull Commissioning Cluster will fund Arthroscopy of the knee joint unless only when there is a clear clinical indication

An electronic copy of this Commissioning Policy is available on the Cluster's website at the following address:

<https://www.sbpct.nhs.uk/bham-and-solihull-cluster/individual-funding-requests.aspx>

### **1. Background:**

Arthroscopy is a surgical procedure for inspection and treatment of problems arising in the knee joint. It has been used extensively in the past to diagnose knee problems but this is no longer appropriate due to the invasive nature of the procedure and the increasing access to less invasive diagnostic methods.

### **2. Criteria for eligibility:**

The Birmingham & Solihull Commissioning Cluster will fund arthroscopy of the knee only for one of the following indications:

- Removal of loose body
- Repair of resection of meniscal tear
- Reconstruction or repair of ligament
- Synovectomy
- Urgent clinical circumstances such as infection, carcinoma, nerve root impingement, bony fracture, avascular necrosis.

The Birmingham & Solihull Commissioning Cluster will not fund arthroscopy of the knee for the investigation of knee pain, with an expectation that less invasive MRI scanning should be used. The only exception is when there is diagnostic uncertainty following a MRI scan.

Arthroscopy only pursued if clinical examination by a consultant specialist or an MRI scan has demonstrated clear evidence of an internal joint derangement (meniscal tear, ligament rupture or loose body) **and** where conservative treatment has failed **or** where it is clear that conservative treatment will not be effective

The Birmingham & Solihull Commissioning Cluster will not usually fund arthroscopic washout for the treatment of osteoarthritis.

### **3. Implementation**

Emergency care patients and patients with suspected cancer are excluded. No request for treatment in these circumstances is required but the provider

will be expected to demonstrate the clinical need as part of the payment verification process. This will be undertaken on the Cluster's behalf by HCS.

The agreed implementation process defined within the acute services contract for your trust should be followed.

#### 4. Procedures Covered by Policy

OPCS Codes (One of)

W871	DIAGNOSTIC ENDOSCOPIC EXAMINATION OF KNEE JOINT	DIAGNOSTIC ENDOSCOPIC EXAMINATION OF KNEE JOINT AND BIOPSY
W878	DIAGNOSTIC ENDOSCOPIC EXAMINATION OF KNEE JOINT	OTHER SPECIFIED
W879	DIAGNOSTIC ENDOSCOPIC EXAMINATION OF KNEE JOINT	UNSPECIFIED