

Our Ref: PW/KJJ/FOI/1224/1104

18th December 2024

Sent by email

Stafford Education & Enterprise Park
Weston Road
Stafford
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Telephone: 0300 123 1461

Dear

FOI-1224/1104

Your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

Thank you for your request for information received on Sunday 8^h December 2024. We can confirm that the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board can provide the following information.

An anonymised copy of this response will be made publicly available on the ICB website.

Please see our responses in blue below:

1. Policy on Fertility Preservation:

Does your ICB have a specific policy regarding fertility preservation (e.g., egg or embryo freezing) for patients with endometriosis prior to surgical intervention for ovarian endometriomas/ endometriotic cysts?

Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent ICB does have a fertility policy which includes fertility preservation. The SSOT ICB policy does not specifically refer to endometriosis, however the policy does state that ICB will fund fertility preservation to all patients undergoing medical treatment that may render them infertile.

SSOT ICB policy can be accessed using the following link:

staffsstoke.icb.nhs.uk/your-nhs-integrated-care-board/our-publications/governance-handbook/all-policies/commissioning/ivf-aligned-policy-v1-1-march-2024/?layout=file

2. Clinical Criteria for Funding:

o Are there set clinical criteria that must be met for patients with endometriosis to receive NHS funding for fertility preservation? For example, do these criteria include:

No set criteria for fertility preservation however patients must meet the policy criteria if they wish to receive fertility treatment (IVF / ICSI).

Patients wishing to use stored gametes must meet the eligibility criteria within this policy at the time of application for assisted conception in an NHS setting.

Age restrictions? Is stated in the policy

Requirement for patients to be undergoing surgery for bilateral endometriomas or other specific endometriosis-related surgeries? Not included in policy

A previous history of surgery for endometriosis? **Not included in policy**

A specific Anti-Müllerian Hormone (AMH) cut-off value? **Not included in policy**

Patients wishing to use stored gametes must meet the eligibility criteria within this policy at the time of application for assisted conception in an NHS setting AMH must be over 3 if the patient is aged over 35 years

3. Scope of Funding:

o If funding is available, is it typically provided for one cycle of egg/embryo freezing, or are additional cycles potentially funded if the patient responds poorly to the initial cycle?

The policy does not account for this scenario, an IFR would have to be completed

4. Second or Further Cycles:

o In the case of an unexpectedly poor response to the initial funded cycle, is there any possibility of additional funding being granted for a second or further cycle of egg/embryo freezing?

As above

5. Statistics on Funding Applications:

o How many patients with endometriosis have been granted NHS funding for fertility preservation prior to surgery in the last two years?

Data is recorded in financial years. 2024/25 = 0, 2023/24 = 1 – This patient met the criteria as per the policy –

Patients must meet the criteria as detailed in the IVF Policy – Cryopreservation of gametes will be available to patients undergoing medical treatment that may render them infertile. Patients with a diagnosis of endometriosis would not automatically qualify for fertility preservation, unless they were having treatment that would render them infertile. Where patients do not meet the strict criteria within the policy then the only route which funding may be considered is on grounds of clinical exceptionality – see policy [Our publications and policies - Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent](#)

o How many funding applications for fertility preservation for patients with endometriosis have been made and subsequently declined during this same period?

For both financial years 2024/25 and 2023/24 None.

To request an internal review

You can request an internal review by contacting the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent ICB FOI team by emailing; staffsstokeFOI@staffsstoke.icb.nhs.uk or by post to the address at the top of this letter within 40 working days of the initial response.

If you are not content with the outcome of your internal review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board's FOI complaints procedure.



**Staffordshire and
Stoke-on-Trent**
Integrated Care Board

The ICO can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

www.ico.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

Paul Winter
Associate Director of Corporate Governance