



**Lincolnshire**  
Integrated Care Board

**Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board**

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**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – DECISION NOTICE**

22 February 2024

Dear Requester

**FOI Reference Number:** 72401

I refer to your email of 31 January 2024 requesting information in relation to keloid scar excision.

I can confirm on behalf of NHS Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) and in accordance with S.1 (1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) that we do hold the information that you have requested. A response to each element of your request is detailed below.

<b>1. Please state the name of your ICB</b>	NHS Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board (ICB)
<b>2. Does surgery for keloid scars require funding approval in your ICB?</b>	Yes, this is in line with the criteria within the ICB's Prior Approval policy: <a href="#">CG 003 - Prior Approval Policy (icb.nhs.uk)</a>
<b>3. If funding is required, is this through a prior approval process (i.e. defined criteria must be met), an individual funding request or another route?</b>	Yes, as per above, criteria detailed below: <b><u>Scar Reduction</u></b> Scar revision will not routinely be funded to improve cosmetic appearance. The ICB will only fund scar reduction for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Repair of or injection/application of topical treatment for keloid scars that result from:</li><li>• Burns</li><li>• Trauma</li><li>• Keloid formation</li><li>• Surgery</li></ul> And one of the following clinical criteria should also be met, providing details of the condition:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scar is functionally disabling, please provide photographic evidence</li> <li>Scar results in facial disfigurement which causes functional disability, please provide photographic evidence</li> </ul>
<b>4. How many applications for keloid scar excision surgery did you receive within your ICB in 2023?</b>	From 01.01.23 to 31.12.23, the ICB received 17 requests. Of these, 6 were approved, <5 were declined and 7 were withdrawn, 5 were because further information requested to fully consider the request, was not provided to the ICB by the referrer, and <5 withdrawn because they were for an initial medical opinion and prior approval is not required at the stage in the pathway.
<b>5. Relating to question 4, how many applications were approved?</b>	As advised above, 6 were approved.
<b>6. Relating to question 4 and 5, what were the anatomical locations of the applications that were received? Please provide a breakdown according to the following areas:</b>	Please see below
<b>a. face</b>	<5
<b>b. ear</b>	7
<b>c. trunk</b>	5
<b>d. upper limb</b>	<5
<b>e. lower limb</b>	0
<b>7. Relating to question 4 and 5, what were the anatomical locations of the applications that were approved? Please provide a breakdown according to the following areas:</b>	Please see below:
<b>a. face</b>	<5
<b>b. ear</b>	<5
<b>c. trunk</b>	
<b>d. upper limb</b>	<5
<b>e. lower limb</b>	
<b>8. Relating to question 4, how many cases were declined?</b>	<5 were declined
<b>9. Relating to question 8, what were the reasons for declining the requests? Please provide a breakdown according to the following reasons:</b>	Please see below
<b>a. Not causing functional impairment</b>	<5
<b>b. Not causing symptoms</b>	
<b>c. Considered cosmetic</b>	

d. Case not considered "exceptional"	
e. Other (please specify)	<5 Scar does not result in facial disfigurement which causes functional disability
10. If you cannot provide a breakdown for cases, please indicate the reason(s) that most commonly apply:	N/A – as full breakdown given
a. Not causing functional impairment	
b. Not causing symptoms	
c. Considered cosmetic	
d. Case not considered "exceptional"	
e. Other (please specify)	
11. With regard to all funding applications your ICB has received, please provide an overall breakdown of the ethnicity of these patients. If you do not have data regarding ethnicity, answers can be based on visual impression of the Fitzpatrick skin types (shown below):	

## The Fitzpatrick Scale



- a. Type 1 - 9
- b. Type 2 - 2
- c. Type 3 - 1
- d. Type 4 - 0
- e. Type 5 - 0
- f. Type 6 - 0
- g. N.A – No photographs to determine - 5

12. Please consider the following hypothetical case, as though it were a real application, and indicate your response:

27 year old woman

**Fit and healthy**  
**No past medical history**  
**No allergies**

**5 year history of large keloid scar on right ear lobule from an ear piercing.**  
**Stable in size for 4 years, no spontaneous improvement.**  
**Has had a course of intralesional steroid injections at another facility 2 years ago with no improvement.**  
**No previous surgery.**  
**Causing embarrassment, social withdrawal, and persistent pruritus, as well as discomfort when lying down.**  
**On examination: 4x3cm, firm, slightly tender, right ear lobule keloid scar (photo attached).**



**Secondary care plastic surgery consultant is requesting approval for excision under local anaesthetic, as a 30 minute day case procedure. Intended as a single surgical episode, with the likelihood of adjuvant steroid injections performed in the outpatient clinic during the follow-up period.**

**Please advise if this case would be approved.**

In line with our ICB criteria currently in place, this request would be approved, as there is photographic evidence of the keloid formation, and it meets the criteria, ie the scar is functionally disabling as the application confirms that the patient has persistent pruritus and discomfort when lying down – which would affect activities of daily living/disabling function – ie sleep.

**13. If not, please indicate the reasoning.**

**N.B. If your policy is for such cases to only be considered following an IFR, please state this below. In such cases, we will provide a completed IFR form and would be grateful if you would consider this according to your usual protocol.**

N/A

Some values are shown as <5. The ICB considers that this information is exempt under Freedom of Information Act 2000, Section 40(2) (personal information) as disclosure of this level of detail could lead to the identification of individuals, which would be in breach of Section 24(1) of the Data

Protection Act 2018 and Article 21 of the UK General Data Protection Regulation. Although I cannot confirm the exact figure, I can confirm that the number in each of these categories is fewer than 5.

The FOIA introduces a broader concept of risk of personal identifiable information because its test for deciding whether personal data can be disclosed is whether disclosure to a member of the public would breach the data protection principles. This means that public authorities have to assess whether releasing apparently anonymised data to a member of the public would breach the data protection principles.

This is intended to ensure that public authorities take into account the additional information that a member of the public might have (information on the Web or in news reports, public libraries, court records etc.) that could allow data to be combined to produce information that relates to and identifies a particular individual - and that is therefore personal data.

Low statistical values increase the likelihood of seemingly anonymised information being combined with other information to identify an individual.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to

Arden & GEM Greater East Midlands Commissioning Support Unit  
FOI TEAM/Corporate Communications Team  
1st Floor, St John's House  
East Street  
Leicester  
LE1 6NB

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot decide unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the ICB.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: telephone 0303 123 1113, email [icocasework@ico.org.uk](mailto:icocasework@ico.org.uk) and <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/>

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<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/>

Yours faithfully  
Corporate Senior Manager  
Arden & GEM CSU

**On behalf of  
NHS Lincolnshire ICB**