

# Difficult Decisions Engagement

Led by the six Staffordshire  
and Stoke-on-Trent CCGs

6 January – 1 March 2020



**Feedback was gathered via online and paper surveys, and through seven events which were structured as ‘be a commissioner’ workshops. These workshops allowed the CCGs to understand how participants felt services should be prioritised.**

Respondents were asked to rank the factors the CCGs must consider when making decisions about the future provision of services\*:



\* In the online survey, this question had a rating check to ensure that respondents rated the considerations individually (e.g. giving one consideration a rating of 1, another a rating of 2, etc). Respondents were also asked to do this in the paper survey; however, some respondents chose to give a rating of 1 to multiple considerations. Some respondents did not rate all criteria. For these reasons, column percentages do not add up to 100%.

# 1

## Assisted conception



**98** survey responses



**18%** potential future service user



**16%** healthcare professional



**15%** interested party or organisation

### Rationale for review

- People living in different areas currently have different access to treatment
- There was not enough evidence of benefit to patients to meet the minimum score for investment
- Although the number of people affected by a potential change in policy is relatively small, infertility can be deeply distressing to those affected.

### Feedback



#### What went well

Quality of care and service

Referral process



#### Concerns raised

Access to treatment (limitation on cycles)

Cost of self-funding

Access to treatment (limitation on cycles)

Referral process



#### Other top themes

Should be funded

Should be restrictions on the number of cycles and eligibility

Consider impact of no treatment on health and wellbeing

# 2

## Hearing loss in adults



**338** survey responses



**38%** current service user



**34%** recent service user



**29%** potential future service user

Deafvibe hosted an event on **8 February** in Newcastle, and Action on Hearing Loss hosted an event on **26 February** in Leek.

### Rationale for review

- People living in North Staffordshire currently have different access to treatment
- In the most recent review, the evidence of benefit to patients with moderate hearing loss was stronger than the benefit to patients with mild hearing loss
- People have different communication needs and hearing loss may not affect them in the same way as it affects someone else
- NICE guidance is clear that communication difficulties should not be judged by only measuring hearing thresholds
- The number of adults with hearing loss is expected to grow with the increase in the number of older people, meaning demand for hearing aids will rise.

### Feedback



#### What went well

Ability to access hearing aids

Quality of service



#### Concerns raised

Access to service

Cost

Use of external providers

Impact on ability to hear and undertaking daily tasks



#### Other top themes

Consider impact of no hearing aid on wellbeing and quality of life

Should be funded in line with NICE guidance

Follow-up care needs to be improved

# 3

## Removal of excess skin following significant weight loss



**58** survey responses



**16%** potential future service user



**21%** healthcare professional



**19%** interested party or organisation

### Rationale for review

- People living in different areas currently have different access to treatment
- There was not enough evidence of benefit to patients to meet the minimum score for investment
- Figures show that obesity rates are rising in both adults and children, meaning that demand for treatments like this are expected to rise.

### Feedback



#### Other top themes

Contrasting views on whether this should be funded

Consider impact of no treatment on health and wellbeing

Should be funded for patients who have made significant lifestyle changes

# 4

## Breast augmentation and reconstruction



**64** survey responses



**11%** potential future service user



**17%** healthcare professional



**27%** interested party or organisation

### Rationale for review

- People living in different areas currently have different access to treatment
- Although the number of people affected by a potential change in policy is relatively small, this is an area of considerable concern to those affected.

### Feedback



#### What went well

Quality of care and service

Positive impact on health and wellbeing



#### Other top themes

Should only be funded if clinically necessary

Should be funded for breast cancer patients

Should not be funded for cosmetic reasons

# 5

## Male and female sterilisation



**203** survey responses



**63%** potential future service user



**6%** healthcare professional



**7%** interested party or organisation

### Rationale for review

- There was not enough evidence of benefit to patients to meet the minimum score for investment.

### Feedback



#### What went well

Quality of care and service

Success of procedure

Referral process



#### Concerns raised

Worries about complications

Worries about pain

Worries it might not work



#### Other top themes

Positive impact on wellbeing and quality of life

Should be funded

Consider the cost of pregnancies to the NHS