

Policy Category:

CBA

Who usually applies for funding?

Not applicable

## Removal and replacement of breast implants

**Commissioning decision**

The ICB will provide funding for removal and replacement of breast implants for patients who meet the criteria defined within this policy.

### Policy Statement:

Counselling at the insertion of implants **must** include advice that implants have a limited lifespan and will often require further surgery.

Where implants have been fitted in the private sector it is not an NHS responsibility and/or priority to remove and replace implants.

Removal and replacement is commissioned when the following indications are met:

- The original augmentation was provided by the NHS
- PLUS**
- The implant is proven to be ruptured
- OR**
- There is severe capsular contracture (Baker grades iii – iv)

Removal only (without replacement) is commissioned if:

- The implant is proven to be ruptured
- OR**
- There is severe capsular contracture (Baker grades iii – iv)

(In this instance both implants can be removed at the same time for symmetry)

Specific instances that will not be commissioned include:

- Removal for cosmetic reasons (where implants fitted either by the NHS or privately funded)
- Removal because of the potential for rupture
- Replacing privately funded breast implants

### Rationale:

Removal and replacement of breast implants for cosmetic reasons is a low priority for NHS funding and will not generally be funded by the ICB. The NHS is not responsible for follow up cosmetic breast surgery following an earlier privately funded augmentation.

### Plain English Summary:

Breast implants have a limited lifespan and will gradually breakdown over time. As a result, many people who have breast augmentation will eventually need to have the original implants removed and may choose to get them replaced. All patients should be advised about this when considering initial breast augmentation surgery. Some patients may also decide to get previous breast implants removed at a later stage for a number of reasons.

When individuals have decided to have breast augmentation for cosmetic reasons and fund

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this privately the NHS in Gloucestershire will not take responsibility for funding any future surgery to remove and replace the implants, although removal only may be funded in certain circumstances.

Removal and replacement of breast implants (that were originally provided by the NHS) is considered to be a cosmetic procedure and will not be funded unless there is a medical need (due to rupture or severe capsular contraction – thickening of the tissue around the implant causing pain or discomfort).

**Evidence base:**

Information for commissioners of Plastic Surgery - referrals and guidelines in Plastic Surgery Modernisation Agency (*Action on Plastic Surgery*) (2005)

For further information please contact [GLICB.IFR@nhs.net](mailto:GLICB.IFR@nhs.net)

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**Policy sign off**

<b>Reviewing Body</b>	<b>Date of review</b>
Effective Clinical Commissioning Policy Group	8 <sup>th</sup> November 2016
Integrated Governance and Quality Committee	18 <sup>th</sup> June 2015

**Version Control**

<b>Version No</b>	<b>Type of Change</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Description of Change</b>
V2	Review date; minor wording change.	4.12.18	Review date changed from 8.11.18 to December 2021: Minor wording changed on Policy statement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Removal for cosmetic reasons (<i>where implants fitted either by the NHS or privately funded</i>) wording inserted.</li> <li>• 'Removal following private operations for cosmetic reasons' – wording removed from policy.</li> </ul>
V3	Review date	10.3.22	Review date changed to March 2025