

BUNIONS – SURGICAL

PRIOR APPROVAL REQUIRED

Referral Criteria

Conservative management techniques have been employed for a minimum of 12 months. These include;

- Avoiding high heel shoes and wearing wide fitting shoes that stretch
- Exercises specifically designed to alleviate the effects of a bunion and keep it flexible
- Applying ice and elevating painful and swollen bunions
- Using non-surgical treatment such as bunion pads, insoles and orthotics to relieve pain (OTC)
- Appropriate analgesia

The CCG will only consider requests for the surgical correction of symptomatic bunions if the following criteria are met:

- The patient suffers from severe* and persistent pain and deformity that causes significant functional impairment despite following the above advice.

OR

- There is a higher risk of ulceration or other complications, for example, neuropathy, for patients with diabetes.

**Severe pain is defined as – very painful on minimal activity, e.g. walking for less than 30 minutes, unable to exercise or carry out daily living, poorly controlled analgesia.*

Supporting evidence must be provided with the prior approval request.

Significant functional impairment is defined as:

- *Symptoms preventing the patient fulfilling activities of daily living or Carrying out vital domestic or carer activities*

Smoking cessation is recommended for all patients considering the possibility of surgery. For help to quit smoking please contact your local Stop Smoking Service or contact your GP Surgery.

Reference:	Policy Name	Review Date	Version
BSW-CP032	Bunion Surgery	March 2025	2