

Knee Arthroscopy and Irrigation

CRITERIA BASED ACCESS

If clinical assessment suggests the patient may have a Red flag condition and arthroscopy is needed urgently, refer for treatment without delay.

(Red flag conditions include infection, carcinoma, nerve root impingement, bony fracture, avascular necrosis).

Symptoms and signs may include recent trauma, constant progressive non-mechanical pain (particularly at night), previous history of cancer, long term oral steroid use, history of drug abuse or HIV, fever, being systemically unwell, recent unexplained weight loss, persisting severe restriction of joint movement, widespread neurological changes, and structural deformity.

Policy- Criteria to access Treatment- Criteria Based Access

The CCG will fund knee arthroscopy in adults only where:

- Clinical examination (or MRI scan) has demonstrated clear evidence of an internal joint derangement (meniscal tear, ligament rupture or loose body)

AND

- Where conservative treatment has failed or where it is clear that conservative treatment will not be effective.

Arthroscopy Is Not Commissioned:

- For diagnostic purposes only (noting the exception above);
- To provide arthroscopic washout alone as a treatment for chronic knee pain due to osteoarthritis. This procedure may be appropriate in conditions such as septic arthritis.

Smoking cessation is recommended for all patients considering the possibility of surgery.