



Clinical Thresholds

Condition or Treatment	Cataracts
Commissioning Threshold	<p>First eye Surgery for cataract (i.e. prime [sole] pathology) All referrals by Optometrists should be made via the Choice Office following assessment and completion of Referral Form (see cataract pathway/clinical guidance). The threshold for referral is a binocular visual acuity of 6/12 or worse plus a completed patient questions section. If a patient does not reach the referral threshold of visual acuity of 6/12 or worse but has exceptional circumstances (be it medical reasons or social reasons) meaning they would benefit from cataract surgery, please complete page 2 of the form.</p> <p>Second eye surgery Second eye surgery will be decided in the ophthalmology clinic either at the first appointment (the patient will then be booked for sequenced surgery) or at follow up after first eye surgery. Medical indications for second eye surgery (eg glaucoma, diabetes, anisometropia) should be recorded in the patient letter in case evidence is required for validation purposes. In other cases second eye surgery will be allowed if the patient is symptomatic and there is visually significant cataract.</p>
Referral guidance	<p>If the request meets the identified criteria the form needs to be completed and emailed via the Choice Office (see form). Exceptional cases can be referred to the CCG's Individual Funding Request Panel for prior approval.</p> <p>Referral form</p>
Effective from	June 2016
Summary of evidence / Rationale	<p>A cataract describes a condition where the naturally clear lens of the eye gradually turns opaque with increasing age. It usually develops over a period of time, causing a gradual deterioration in eyesight, and may eventually lead to blindness. As the condition affects over a third of people aged over 65, cataract surgery continues to be the commonest elective procedure in day surgery performed in the UK.</p> <p>During cataract surgery the clouded natural lens of the eye</p>

	<p>is removed and clear vision is most commonly obtained with an implanted artificial lens. In the vast majority of cases, the surgery involves local or topical anaesthesia which markedly reduces operative and recovery time.</p> <p>80-90% of patients report a benefit from surgery, which include improved clarity of vision and improved colour vision. This in turn has implications for a positive impact on other health and social care needs including a reduction in slips, trips and falls amongst the elderly.</p> <p>Cataracts can develop in one or both eyes, and one eye can often be more affected than the other. Over one third of all NHS cataract operations are performed on the second eye. Second eye surgery confers significant additional gains in visual function in everyday activities and quality of life above and beyond those achieved after surgery to the first eye, including ability to meet the DVLA driving standard (ref 6)</p> <p>There are risks associated with cataract surgery, some common and many very rare. However, complications are usually treatable and reasonably good outcomes can be expected (ref 5).</p>
Date	August 2018
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Contact for this policy	Dr Sarah Hay GP/Governing Member Sarah.hay@nhs.net

References:

1. NHS Atlas of Variation, (cataract spend, cataract admissions) available at: www.sepho.org.uk/extras/maps/NHSAAtlas/atlas.html
 2. RNIB / Royal College of Ophthalmologists (2011). Don't turn back the clock: Cataract surgery – the need for patient-centred care. http://www.rnib.org.uk/getinvolved/campaign/yoursight/Documents/Cataract_report.pdf
 3. The Royal College of Ophthalmologists (RCOphth). Cataract surgery guidelines. 2010 http://www.rcophth.ac.uk/core/core_picker/download.asp?id=544&filetitle=Cataract+Surgery+Guidelines+2010
 4. Department of Health: Action on cataracts good practice guidance, Jan 2000. http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130107105354/http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/documents/digitalasset/dh_4014514
 5. Map of medicine <http://healthguides.mapofmedicine.com/choices/map/cataract1.html>
 6. NHS UK <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Cataracts-age-related/Pages/Introduction.aspx>
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