



**Bristol, North Somerset  
and South Gloucestershire**  
Integrated Care Board

# Commissioning Policy Individual Funding Request

**Functional Electrical Stimulation for Foot  
Drop of Central Neurological Origin  
(including Surface and Implanted devices)**

**Individual Funding Request Policy**

**Date Adopted: 16 September 2016**

**Version: v1617.1.01**

**Individual Funding Request Team  
Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group**

### Document Control

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| Equality Impact Assessment                                     |  |

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|                  |            |                 |                        |

**THIS TREATMENT IS NOT ROUTINELY COMMISSIONED FOR ANY PATIENTS  
AND INDIVIDUAL FUNDING PANEL APPROVAL MUST BE SOUGHT PRIOR TO  
REFERRAL  
THIS POLICY RELATES TO ALL PATIENTS**

## **Functional Electrical Stimulation for Foot Drop of Central Neurological Origin (including Surface and Implanted devices)**

### **Policy Statement & Date of Adoption: 16<sup>th</sup> September 2016**

Functional Electrical Stimulation [FES] for foot drop is not routinely funded by the ICB and is subject to this restricted policy.

### **General Principles**

**Funding approval will only be given in line with these general principles. Where patients are unable to meet these principles in addition to the specific treatment criteria set out in this policy, funding approval will not be given.**

1. Funding approval must be secured by the patient's treating clinician prior to referring patients for surgical opinions. Referring patients to secondary care without funding approval having been secured not only incurs significant costs in out-patient appointments for patients that may not qualify for surgery, but inappropriately raises the patient's expectation of treatment.
2. On limited occasions, the ICB may approve funding for an assessment only in order to confirm or obtain evidence demonstrating whether a patient meets the criteria for funding. In such cases, patients should be made aware that the assessment does not mean that they will be provided with surgery and surgery will only be provided where it can be demonstrated that the patients meets the criteria to access treatment in this policy.
3. Where funding approval is given by the Individual Funding Request Panel, it will be available for a specified period of time, normally one year.

### **Background**

Drop foot is the inability to lift up the foot and toes properly in the swing phase of the gait when walking, as a result of altered nerve impulse traffic in the peroneal nerve. This can cause abnormal gait, reduced walking speed, tiredness and an increased risk of trips and falls. The main central neurological causes are stroke, multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, incomplete spinal cord

injury and traumatic brain injury. FES can be used to treat patients with dropped foot of central neurological origin.

FES has traditionally been delivered by surface electrodes through an orthotic device to improve function whilst it is worn or as a therapeutic intervention to improve function after its use. Partially

implantable devices are now being developed as well where the stimulator and electrodes are implanted below the skin at the peroneal nerve. (Burridge)

NICE has previously stated that there appears to be adequate evidence of safety and efficacy of surface worn FES but has not reviewed implantable devices. (NICE, 2009)

### **Commissioned Treatments for Drop Foot**

The commissioned pathway for Drop Foot can include Physiotherapy and Ankle-foot orthosis (AFO). AFO is worn on the lower part of the leg to help control the ankle and foot and it holds the foot and ankle in a straightened position to improve walking. (NHS Choices)

#### Policy

Functional Electrical Stimulation including Surface Orthotic and/or implantable devices for patients with dropped foot of central neurological origin is not routinely commissioned.

Patients who are not eligible for treatment under this policy may be considered on an individual basis where their GP or consultant believes exceptional circumstances exist that warrant deviation from the rule of this policy.

Individual cases will be reviewed at the ICB's Individual Funding Request Panel upon receipt of a completed application form from the patient's GP, Consultant or Clinician. Applications cannot be considered from patients personally.

If you would like further copies of this policy or need it in another format, such as Braille or another language, please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 0800 073 0907 or 0117 947 4477.

Burridge, J. (n.d.). Implantable electrode technology - the future of electrical stimulation?

NHS Choices. (n.d.). Foot drop . Retrieved from NHS Choices: <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/foot-drop/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

NICE. (2009, January). Functional electrical stimulation for drop foot of central neurological origin.  
Retrieved from [www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk): <https://www.nice.org.uk/Guidance/IPG278>

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|---------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|------------------|
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