

Reference: FOI.ICB-2324/177

Subject: Ear Wax Removal Services in Primary or Community Care

*I can confirm that the ICB **does hold the information requested**; please see responses below:*

| QUESTION | RESPONSE |
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| <p>1. Does the integrated care board currently commission an ear wax removal service or services within primary care or community ear care services, available to <u>all</u> patients registered with GP practices within the ICS's boundary, as per NICE guidance?</p> | <p>Yes - ear irrigation is included in the Supplementary Service specification. All BNSSG practices are signed up.</p> <p>All patients meeting the clinical criteria may access the service.</p> |
| <p>2. If it does, how can a patient access this service or services when it is considered clinically necessary and/or self-care advice, if appropriate, has been unsuccessful?</p> | <p>By GP practice appointment</p> |
| <p>3. If the integrated care board does commission this service or services within primary care or community ear care services, please provide the name or names of those commissioned providers and their address or addresses.</p> | <p>See enclosed Spreadsheet "BNSSG Practice names and addresses.xlsx"</p> |
| <p>4. Does the integrated care board have a policy or guidance on ear wax removal and/or referral pathways for its primary care providers for patients for whom the benefit of ear wax removal is clinically indicated?</p> | <p>Yes</p> |

5. If the integrated care board has issued such guidance, please provide a copy.

Management in Primary Care

Clinical Knowledge Summaries (CKS) has advice on [management of ear wax](#) and irrigation in primary care.

Our ENT GPSI advice is as follows:

In primary care regular drops can be used, either oil based (CKS recommends olive or almond oil if not allergic) or sodium bicarbonate. Obviously it is important to advise against the use of cotton buds. Syringing can be tried as long as there are no contraindications, after using drops for a few days. There's a detailed list of [contraindications](#) in CKS but they are mainly intuitive such as TM perforation, previous ear surgery or recurrent infections.

Alternatives to nurse led syringing

Self care -There are some [self-care guidelines](#) for management of ear wax on the NHS choices website.

A locally produced leaflet is also available here [Blocked Ears \(Wax\) - A self-care guide for patients](#) and on the ICB website so the link can be sent to patients here: [Blocked ears leaflet - NHS BNSSG ICB](#)

Bulb syringes - Some GP surgeries no longer offer ear syringing. If initial self-care is ineffective then some CCGs and GP practices are now advocating use of **Bulb Syringes** (if no contraindications such as perforation, pain or discharge), although there is still some controversy over their use. If patients have ear wax confirmed on examination, do not have contraindications and are willing to try this method then this may be an option. Bulb syringes can be bought from local pharmacies.

Ear candles - are not recommended and their use should be discouraged

due to risk of injury.

Private ear syringing/microsuction - this is now becoming more widely available from some high street opticians and pharmacies.

Referral for microsuction

The supplementary services specification contract for 2019/2020 includes the offering of irrigation in GP practices. Irrigation should now be offered first and foremost in the primary care setting for those patient's where it is clinically appropriate. If you have any questions regarding this please contact bnssg.pc.contracts@nhs.net

Referral for microsuction of ear for wax or for any other indication is subject to a restricted access policy:

[Microsuction for Ear Wax, Discharge or Debris Removal in Secondary Care - CBA / PA Policy](#)

This policy allows onward referral without prior approval if certain criteria are met e.g. previous cholesteatoma surgery or recurrent or chronic ear canal pathologies (see policy for details). For other indications prior approval is required.

Referrals that meet criteria or have prior approval attached can be referred via eRS (ENT - ear - request nurse led aural toilet clinic). Clinics are available at St Michaels Hospital and EGTC.

Efforts are made to ensure the accuracy and agreement of these guidelines, including any content uploaded, referred to or linked to from the system. However, BNSSG ICB cannot guarantee this. This guidance does not override the individual responsibility of healthcare professionals to make decisions appropriate to the circumstances of



**Bristol, North Somerset
and South Gloucestershire**

Integrated Care Board

the individual patient, in consultation with the patient and/or guardian or carer, in accordance with the mental capacity act, and informed by the summary of product characteristics of any drugs they are considering. Practitioners are required to perform their duties in accordance with the law and their regulators and nothing in this guidance should be interpreted in a way that would be inconsistent with compliance with those duties.

The information provided in this response is accurate as of 16 August 2023 and has been approved for release by Jenny Bowker, Deputy Director of Integrated and Primary Care for NHS Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire ICB.

| Practice Name | Address 1 | Address 2 | Address 3 | Address 4 | Postcode |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------|----------|
| Air Balloon Surgery | Kenn Road | | St George | Bristol | BS5 7PD |
| Almondsbury Surgery | Sundays Hill | | Almondsbury | Bristol | BS32 4DS |
| Beechwood Medical Practice | Fishponds Primary Care Centre | Beechwood Road | Fishponds | Bristol | BS16 3TD |
| Bradley Stoke Surgery | Brook Way | | Bradley Stoke | Bristol | BS32 9DS |
| Bridge View Medical | 67 Coronation Road | | Southville | Bristol | BS3 1AT |
| Broadmead Medical Centre | 59 Broadmead | | | Bristol | BS1 3EA |
| Cadbury Heath Healthcare | Parkwall Road | | Cadbury Heath | Bristol | BS30 8HS |
| Charlotte Keel Medical Practice | Charlotte Keel Health Centre | Seymour Road | Easton | Bristol | BS5 0UA |
| Close Farm Surgery | 47 Victoria Road | | North Common | Bristol | BS30 5JZ |
| Concord Medical Centre | Braydon Avenue | | Little Stoke | Bristol | BS34 6BQ |
| Coniston Medical Practice | The Parade | Coniston Road | | Bristol | BS34 5TF |
| Crest Family Practice | William Budd Health Centre | Knowle West Health Park | Knowle | Bristol | BS4 1WH |
| Downend Health Group | North Street | | Downend | Bristol | BS16 5SG |
| East Trees Health Centre | Eastville Health Centre | East Park | Eastville | Bristol | BS5 6YA |
| Fallodon Way Medical Centre | 13 Fallodon Way | | Henleaze | Bristol | BS9 4HT |
| Fireclay Health | Bellevue Road | | St George | Bristol | BS5 7PH |
| Fishponds Family Practice | Fishponds Primary Care Centre | Beechwood Road | Fishponds | Bristol | BS16 3TD |
| Grange Road Surgery | Grange Road | | Bishopsworth | Bristol | BS13 8LD |
| Heywood Family Practice | 1 Lodway Gardens | | Pill | Bristol | BS20 0DL |
| Hillview Family Practice | Hartcliffe Health Centre | Hareclive Road | Hartcliffe | Bristol | BS13 0JP |
| Homeless Health Service (Brisdoc) | 1 Jamaica Street | | | Bristol | BS2 8JP |
| Horfield Health Centre | Lockleaze Road | | Horfield | Bristol | BS7 9RR |
| Kennedy Way Surgery | Kennedy Way | | Yate | Bristol | BS37 4AA |
| Kingswood Health Centre | Alma Road | | Kingswood | Bristol | BS15 4EJ |
| Leap Valley Surgery | Beaufort Road | | Downend | Bristol | BS16 6UG |
| Mendip Vale Medical Practice | Pudding Pie Lane Surgery | Pudding Pie Lane | Langford | Bristol | BS40 5EL |
| Monks Park Surgery | 24 Monks Park Avenue | | Horfield | Bristol | BS7 0UE |
| Montpelier Health Centre | Bath Buildings | | Montpelier | Bristol | BS6 5PT |
| Nightingale Valley Practice | Brooklea Health Centre | Wick Road | Brislington | Bristol | BS4 4HU |
| Pioneer Medical Group | Ardenton Walk | | Brentry | Bristol | BS10 6SP |
| Sea Mills Surgery | 2 Riverleaze | | Sea Mills | Bristol | BS9 2HL |
| Shirehampton Group Practice | Shirehampton Health Centre | Pembroke Road | Shirehampton | Bristol | BS11 9SB |
| St Mary Street Surgery | 24 St Mary Street | | Thornbury | Bristol | BS35 2AT |
| Stockwood Medical Centre | Hollway Road | | Stockwood | Bristol | BS14 8PT |
| Stoke Gifford Medical Centre | Ratcliffe Drive | | Stoke Gifford | Bristol | BS34 8UE |
| Streamside Surgery | Eastland Road | | Thornbury | Bristol | BS35 1DP |
| Student Health Service | Hampton House Health Centre | St Michael's Hill | Cotham | Bristol | BS6 6AU |
| The Armada Family Practice | Whitchurch Health Centre | Armada Road | Whitchurch | Bristol | BS14 0SU |
| The Family Practice | Western College | Cotham Road | Cotham | Bristol | BS6 6DF |
| The Lennard Surgery | 1 Lewis Road | | Bedminster Down | Bristol | BS13 7JD |

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| The Merrywood Practice | William Budd Health Centre | Knowle West Health Park | Knowle | Bristol | BS4 1WH |
| The Old School Surgery | Manor Road | | Fishponds | Bristol | BS16 2JD |
| The Orchard Medical Centre | Macdonald Walk | | Kingswood | Bristol | BS15 8NJ |
| Wellington Road Family Practice | Wellington Road | | Yate | Bristol | BS37 5UY |
| Wells Road Surgery | 233 Wells Road | | Knowle | Bristol | BS4 2DF |
| Wellspring Surgery | Wellspring Healthy Living Centre | Beam Street | Barton Hill | Bristol | BS5 9QT |
| West Walk Surgery | Yate West Gate Centre | 21 West Walk | | Bristol | BS37 4AX |
| Westbury-on-Trym Practice | Westbury-on-trym Primary Care Centre | Westbury Hill | Westbury-on-Trym | Bristol | BS9 3AA |
| Whiteladies Medical Group | Whatley Road | | Clifton | Bristol | BS8 2PU |
| Bedminster Family Practice | Regent Road | | Bedminster | Bristol | BS3 4AT |
| Birchwood Medical Practice | Brooklea Health Centre | Wick Road | Brislington | Bristol | BS4 4HU |
| Courtside Surgery | Kennedy Way | | Yate | Bristol | BS37 4DQ |
| Emersons Green Medical Centre | St Luke's Close | | Emersons Green | Bristol | BS16 7AL |
| Frome Valley Medical Centre | 2 Court Road | | Frampton Cotterell | Bristol | BS36 2DE |
| Gloucester Road Medical Centre | Tramway House | 1A Church Road | Horfield | Bristol | BS7 8SA |
| Greenway Community Practice | Greystoke Avenue | | Southmead | Bristol | BS10 6AF |
| Hanham Health | 33 Whittucks Road | | Hanham | Bristol | BS15 3HY |
| Hartwood Healthcare | Hartcliffe Health Centre | Hareclive Road | Hartcliffe | Bristol | BS13 0JP |
| Lawrence Hill Health Centre | Hassell Drive | | Lawrence Hill | Bristol | BS2 0AN |
| Pembroke Rd Surgery | 111 Pembroke Rd | | Clifton | Bristol | BS8 3EU |
| Pilning Surgery | Northwick Road | | Pilning | Bristol | BS35 4JE |
| Priory Surgery | 326 Wells Road | | Knowle | Bristol | BS4 2QJ |
| Severn View Family Practice | Eastland Road | | Thornbury | Bristol | BS35 1DP |
| Southmead & Henbury Family Practice | Ullswater Road | | Southmead | Bristol | BS10 6DF |
| Clevedon Medical Centre | Clevedon Medical Centre | | Old Street | Clevedon | BS21 6DG |
| Tyntesfield Practice | Tower House Medical Centre | | Stockway South | Nailsea | BS48 2XX |
| Harbourside Family Practice | The Marina Healthcare Centre | 2 Haven View | | Portishead | BS20 7QA |
| Portishead Medical Group | Victoria Square | | | Portishead | BS20 6AQ |
| 168 Medical Group | 168 Locking Road | | | Weston super Mare | BS23 3HQ |
| Horizon Health Centre | Healthy Living Centre | 68 Lonsdale Avenue | | Weston super Mare | BS23 3SJ |
| Stafford Medical Group | Highlands Lane | | Locking Castle | Weston super Mare | BS24 7DX |
| The Cedars Surgery | 87 New Bristol Road | | Worle | Weston super Mare | BS22 6AJ |
| The Milton Surgery | 232-234 Milton Road | | | Weston super Mare | BS22 8AG |
| Tudor Lodge | 3 Nithsdale Road | | | Weston super Mare | BS23 4JP |
| Graham Road Surgery | 22 Graham Road | | | Weston super Mare | BS23 1YA |
| Three Shires Medical Practice | 2 Back Lane | | Marshfield | Wiltshire | SN14 8NQ |
| Winscombe & Banwell Family Practice | Hillyfields Way | | | Winscombe | BS25 1AF |