

NHS help to try to have a baby

Proposed changes for people living in north east London

Have your say on our proposed changes by 11.59pm on 22 August 2022. Your feedback will help us create our final policy. Please fill in the online survey on our website - www.northeastlondonccg.nhs.uk/fertility

If you need help to try to get pregnant, now or in the future, our proposed changes could affect you.

It could be that you have a condition that affects your fertility, or ability to have a baby. You may have been trying to get pregnant for a number of years, or you need to have a treatment or medication that will affect whether you will be able to have a baby in future.

There are many treatments that can help you try to get pregnant, some of which are paid for by the NHS.

We've set out which medical treatments, known as assisted conception and fertility preservation, we think that the NHS in north east London should fund and who should be able to get this treatment. This is our proposed new fertility policy.

The aim of the new policy is not to reduce the treatments that we fund or who is eligible to have them. Depending on where you live, what we are proposing is likely to increase the amount of treatment you can have, and improve access to some treatments.

We want to make it so that wherever you live in north east London, you are able to have the same fertility treatment – this is not currently the case.

We have used the latest national [clinical guidelines](#) from National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), research and best practice to develop the proposed policy. Clinicians including GPs and fertility experts have also helped to shape it.

We need to make best use of NHS money given the increasing needs of our population and competing demands for resources. The proposals will require increased investment, but we believe the policy addresses inequities across north east London and is fairer.

Our proposed new fertility policy

The proposed policy is for both individuals and couples with a fertility problem regardless of your sexual orientation, gender identity or relationship status.

The policy is for people who live in Barking and Dagenham, City of London, Hackney, Havering, Newham, Redbridge, Tower Hamlets, and Waltham Forest.

We recommend you read our full engagement document on our website, www.northeastlondonccg.nhs.uk/fertility which explains why we are proposing changes to fertility treatment, who was involved in creating the new policy, and explanations of the treatments. Below is a summary of the main areas of the policy and what we want to change.

- **Who can get NHS funded help to get pregnant**

To make it clear who is able to get NHS treatment to help to try to get pregnant, we have a list of things people need to meet to get fertility treatment. This is called eligibility criteria. For assisted conception treatments, unless otherwise stated, you need to meet this eligibility criteria.

This includes things like not being too over or under weight, if you or your partner (if you have one) have a child already, the age of the woman or person trying to get pregnant, and if you smoke.

Most of these criteria are the same as the existing fertility policies, however we want to increase the upper age limit for treatment to be under 43 years old. In the existing policies this was aged 39 or 41 depending on where you lived in north east London.

- **How many IVF cycles you can have at what age**

We want to change how many embryo transfer procedures we should fund for people of different ages, so it is the same across north east London.

During IVF, eggs are removed from the ovaries and fertilised with sperm in a laboratory. One or two fertilised eggs, called embryos, are then put into the womb to try to grow and develop. If there are any remaining good quality embryos, these will be frozen to use later in a frozen embryo transfer if the first transfer is not successful. This process is one full IVF cycle.

Treatment to help get pregnant	Proposed policy
IVF for the woman or person trying to get pregnant up to their 40 th birthday	Increase to three full IVF cycles for people trying to get pregnant aged 39 and under.
IVF for the woman or person trying to get pregnant aged 40 and over	Increase to one full cycle for people trying to get pregnant who are aged 40, 41 and 42.

- **Funding of intrauterine insemination (IUI)**

IUI is a type of artificial insemination. This is when the better quality sperm are separated out and this sperm is then injected directly in to the womb. This can either involve the partner's sperm or donor sperm.

We want to increase who is eligible for NHS funded IUI in north east London.

Treatment to help get pregnant	Proposed policy
Intrauterine insemination (IUI)	<p>Increase to fund up to six cycles of IUI for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. individuals and couples trying to get pregnant using donor insemination who have fertility problems. b. some people with social, cultural or religious objections to IVF. c. people with physical disability or psychosexual problems who have fertility problems. d. people with a condition that means you need IUI as part of your fertility treatment.

- **Funding of assisted conception treatments using donor eggs/sperm**

We want to now pay for the donor eggs or sperm that are used in some NHS funded assisted conception treatments for people with fertility problems or certain conditions.

Treatment to help get pregnant	Proposed policy
Funding of donor eggs/sperm	<p>Increase funding to cover the costs of the donor sperm and eggs for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. people with conditions recommended by NICE. b. individuals and couples trying to get pregnant using donor insemination who have fertility problems.

- **Fertility preservation**

We want to increase how long eggs, sperm and embryos are stored for some people who are eligible for this.

Some people will have a condition or need treatment that can cause them to become infertile. Where possible before some treatments you can have eggs, sperm or embryos frozen and stored.

Treatment to help get pregnant	Proposed policy
Storage of eggs, sperm and embryos for people with conditions or who need a treatment that can cause infertility.	<p>Increase the time eggs, sperm and embryos are stored for eligible people to:</p> <p>a. up to 10 years storage for people aged 32 and over.</p> <p>b. for people aged under 32 years, storage is funded up until their 43rd birthday.</p>

- **Ovarian reserve criteria**

We want to be clear about what criteria you have to meet around the quality or number of eggs you have, known as ovarian reserve, to be eligible for NHS funded assisted conception treatment.

Treatment to help get pregnant	Proposed policy
Ovarian reserve criteria	To be eligible for assisted conception treatment, regardless of your age, there should not be evidence of low ovarian reserve measured by two or more of the three NICE recommended tests.

Find out more

We have information on our website, www.northeastlondonccg.nhs.uk/fertility where you can find out more about what we want to change.

We are having some meetings where you can hear about the proposed policy and give feedback.

How to have your say

We want you to tell us what you think of our proposed changes.

To tell us what you think please fill in the online survey on our website, or come to one of our meetings.

www.northeastlondonccg.nhs.uk/fertility