



Circular HSC (SQSD) (NICE IPG703) 21/21

**Subject: NICE Interventional Procedures Guideline
– IPG703 - Laparoscopic removal of
uterine fibroids with power morcellation**

For action by:

Chief Executive of HSC Board – **for distribution to:**
Director of Performance Management & Service
Improvement
Director of Commissioning
Assistant Directors of Commissioning
Director of Integrated Care to also cascade to:
Family Practitioner Services Leads – for cascade to relevant
Family Practitioner groups

Chief Executive of Public Health Agency – **for distribution to:**
Director of Public Health and Medical Director – for cascade
to relevant staff
Director of Nursing and AHPs – for cascade to relevant
staff

Chief Executives of HSC Trusts – **for distribution to:**
Medical Directors – for cascade to relevant staff
Directors of Acute Services – for cascade to relevant staff
HSC Clinical and Social Governance Leads

Chief Executive of Regulation & Quality Improvement Authority - for
distribution to relevant independent healthcare establishments

For Information to:

Chair of HSC Board
Chairs of HSC Trusts
Chief Executive of NIAS
Chief Executive of PCC
Chief Executive of NIBTS
Chief Executive of NIPEC
Chief Executive/Postgraduate Dean, NIMDTA
Clinical Education Centre, BSO
NI NICE Implementation Facilitator
Members of NI NICE Managers' Forum

Summary of Contents:

This guidance provides evidence-based recommendations on
laparoscopic removal of uterine fibroids with power morcellation in
adults. This involves cutting the fibroids into small pieces to remove
them.

Enquiries:

Any enquiries about the content of this Circular should be addressed
to:
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Related documents:

HSC (SQSD) 4/14

Superseded documents

None

Status of Contents:

For action

Implementation:

Immediate

Additional copies:

Available to download from
<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/safety-and-quality-standards/national-institute-health-and-care-excellence-nice>



Dear Colleague

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CARE EXCELLENCE (NICE):
INTERVENTIONAL PROCEDURES GUIDELINE – IPG703 - LAPAROSCOPIC REMOVAL
OF UTERINE FIBROIDS WITH POWER MORCELLATION**

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) produces guidance as part of the Interventional Procedure Programme. Clinicians who have developed new procedures send these too NICE to evaluate their effectiveness. Cost is not considered as part of this evaluation. Solely for this programme, NICE communicates directly with the HSC in Northern Ireland and consequently Departmental bi-monthly circulars are normally only required. An exception has been made for this due to the evidence identified on the safety, and the limited evidence on efficacy of this procedure.

The advice in the NICE guideline states:

Evidence on the safety of laparoscopic removal of uterine fibroids with power morcellation shows potentially serious complications. In particular there is a risk of spreading undiagnosed malignant tissue, which has higher prevalence in people who are postmenopausal or over 50. Evidence on the procedure's efficacy is limited in quantity. Therefore, for people who are postmenopausal or over 50, this procedure should not be used.

The HSC sector also should note that the Department expects the HSC sector to comply with this guidance in their delivery of services to patients who are postmenopausal or over 50 with uterine fibroids.

Indications and current treatments

Uterine fibroids (also known as uterine leiomyomas or myomas) are benign tumours of the uterus. They can be asymptomatic or can cause symptoms including heavy periods or intermenstrual bleeding. They can be associated with fertility problems and miscarriage.

Treatment depends on whether the fibroids cause symptoms, and if the person would like to become pregnant in the future. For symptomatic fibroids, treatment options include medication, interventional radiology and surgery. Interventional radiology treatments include uterine artery embolisation and MRI-guided focused ultrasound. Surgery includes hysterectomy, myomectomy, endometrial ablation techniques and myolysis.

Outline of the procedure

Laparoscopic surgery with power morcellation allows uterine fibroids to be cut into smaller pieces so they can be removed laparoscopically and without the need for a laparotomy. The procedure aims to reduce symptoms caused by fibroids.

Laparoscopic removal of uterine fibroids with power morcellation is done with the patient under general anaesthesia. During laparoscopic surgery and under direct visualisation an electrosurgical morcellator is introduced through a small incision into the abdomen and used to cut the uterine fibroid into smaller pieces. If a hysterectomy is planned, morcellation can be used to also remove part or all of the uterus. The fragments are removed through the morcellation cannula. The removed tissue should be sent for histological analysis. To reduce the risk of disseminating benign and malignant uterine tissue, the tissue can be contained in an insufflated sterile bag while being morcellated within the abdomen.

The full NICE interventional procedure guideline is available for download at:
<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ipg703>

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael McBride', written in a cursive style.

Prof Sir Michael McBride
Chief Medical Officer