

Policy statement:	Bunions	
Status:	South east Essex	Individual Prior Approval
	South west Essex	Threshold Approval

The surgical treatment of asymptomatic bunions is regarded as a procedure of low clinical priority. These procedures are, therefore, are not routinely funded by south Essex CCGs.

Removal of bunions will only be considered where:

- Conservative methods of management* have failed,

and

- The patient suffers significant functional impairment** as a result of the bunions,

and

- There is radiographic evidence of joint damage (at point of referral).

***Conservative measures** include:

Avoiding high heel shoes and wearing wide fitting leather shoes

Non surgical treatments such as bunion pads, splints, insoles or shields or exercise where appropriate

****Significant functional impairment** is defined as:

The patient complains of moderate to severe joint pain not relieved by extended non-surgical management **AND** has severe impact on their ability to undertake activities of daily living.

Concerns about cosmetic appearance should be managed by the patient or Primary Care and not referred into secondary care or a Community Podiatric service.

Detailed documentation against the above criteria that are fulfilled is mandatory in the referral letter to secondary care. Clinically inappropriate referrals will be returned to GPs.

Follow up will be capped at one follow up unless there are exceptional circumstances.