

## NHS post-operative support for self-funded bariatric surgery

Bariatric surgery (or weight loss surgery) is recognised as the most clinically and cost-effective treatment option for people with severe and complex obesity<sup>1</sup>. Following bariatric surgery, people should have access to lifelong monitoring to ensure that their nutritional requirements are met and the risk of developing nutritional deficiencies after bariatric surgery are reduced<sup>1</sup>.

NHS Frimley recognises that due to high demand for specialist weight management services and very long waiting times, some residents are now paying privately for weight loss surgery in the UK or in other countries. This statement sets out what residents can and cannot expect as part of the NHS service following private treatment.

- NHS Frimley would strongly advise that prior to proceeding with any surgical intervention abroad, it's important to seek advice from your GP and be clear on how after-care will be co-ordinated and provided following surgery. There may be additional costs for aftercare and potentially return visits to the surgical centre. This document provides more information on going abroad for medical treatment [Going abroad for medical treatment - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/going-abroad-for-medical-treatment)
- The British Obesity and Metabolic Surgery Society (BOMSS) guidelines<sup>1</sup> recommend that follow-up care should remain with the bariatric surgery centre (that carried out the procedure) for the first 2 years. The type and frequency of nutritional monitoring should reflect the bariatric procedure and may need to be individualised
- The National Institute for Health & Care Excellence (NICE) guidance applies only to services commissioned (paid for) by the NHS and therefore, providers of bariatric services outside of the UK or by private providers are not covered by the NICE expected standards
- Patients do not have the automatic right to re-enter NHS care (from private care) at any time during an episode of care; in the case of bariatric surgery, the episode of care is 2 years as stated above. Please check before your surgery what level of after-care your NHS GP will be able to provide and what you might need to pay for privately. Your NHS GP may be able to refer you to a specialist weight management service for after-care
- If follow-up care is required locally following bariatric surgery that has been conducted by a private provider (in another country, or within the United Kingdom) and your NHS GP is unable to provide this or refer you to a specialist weight management clinic, this can be provided by a private general practitioner (GP) service. Most health insurance companies provide private GP services, alternatively this can be paid for as required
- Private patients may have had their primary obesity surgery outside of NHS contracts at independent/ private providers (in another country, or within the United Kingdom) but subsequently present at an NHS facility as a clinical emergency. The NHS has a duty of care for these patients and will fund emergency and clinically urgent treatment