

RCV: Panniculectomy Backgrounder

Reduction in Clinical Variation: Panniculectomy

Overview

As part of the Alberta Surgical Initiative (ASI), a plan that strives to ensure all Albertans will receive their scheduled surgeries within clinically appropriate targets, Alberta Health Services (AHS) is implementing Reduction in Clinical Variation (RCV) in surgery.

Through collaborative development and implementation of clinical guidelines, indications, and recommendations for select scheduled surgical procedures, RCV will positively impact overall surgical wait times, improve quality of life for those needing surgery, and encourage consistency in application of clinical guidelines for those procedures across the province. RCV also falls under a larger AHS umbrella of clinical appropriateness work, Right Care Alberta.

Panniculectomy

The first clinical procedure fully operationalizing RCV is the panniculectomy, which is the removal of the abdominal panniculus without the involvement of the abdominal wall or expectations of a cosmetic outcome.

Approximately 350 cases of panniculectomy are completed in Alberta each year. Historically, the majority (approximately 85 per cent) of these are publicly funded. Applying the RCV Ethical Framework may increase the number of procedures that are publicly funded, as the new clinical indications will better define medically necessary requirements.

Process

To determine clinical guidelines and parameters for procedures, AHS developed a RCV process to follow for procedures being reviewed, which includes the following steps:

1. Development of RCV Ethical Framework to guide decision-making.
 2. Data review.
 3. Clinical evidence reviews to identify measures of appropriateness.
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Created by: Heidi Stachniak, Stewart Hamilton

4. Development of clinical guidelines, indications and recommendations with clinicians.
5. Development of implementation plan with stakeholder engagement.
6. Performance measurement, monitoring, and analysis.
7. Quality assurance and review.

Development of panniculectomy clinical indications

The Panniculectomy Clinical Indications have been developed for the procedure through an RCV panniculectomy working group (Appendix A). Membership included surgical leadership from each zone, as well as subject matter experts representing general surgery and plastic surgery across the zones.

Clinical indications were approved by:

- Provincial Surgery Operations Committee (PSOC) – May 30, 2022

And endorsed by:

- AHS Medical Directors – June 8, 2022
- Provincial Practitioner Executive Committee (PPEC) – Sept. 2, 2022

Panniculectomy project status

Implementation Planning

Implementation planning is underway for provincial adoption of the panniculectomy clinical indications. To support wide-spread adoption, key stakeholders are being identified and preferred forums for broader engagement and communications are being explored.

Appendix A: RCV Panniculectomy Working Group Membership

Member	Title	Zone	Representing
Surgical Leadership			
Dr. Carl Nohr	Clinical Department Head, Surgery MHRH	South	Zone Leadership
Dr. Cinzia Gaudelli	Peri-operative Medical Director	Central	Zone Leadership
Dr. David Williams	Zone Clinical Department Head, Surgery	Edmonton	Zone Leadership
Dr. Francis Sutherland	Alberta Surgical Initiative Deputy Department Head of Surgery	Calgary	ASI Deputy
Dr. Ken Stewart	Deputy Zone Clinical Department Head Surgery responsible for Surgical Access and Improvement	Edmonton	ASI Deputy
Dr. Kevin Hildebrand	Zone Clinical Department Head, Surgery	Calgary	Zone Leadership
Dr. Peter Miles	Zone Clinical Department Head Surgery	North	Zone Leadership & General Surgery
Surgical Representatives			
Dr. Franco Leoni	Surgeon	Central	General Surgery
Dr. Jonathan Toy	Surgeon	Edmonton	Plastics
Dr. Kody Johnson	Surgeon	Central	Plastics
Dr. Noah Switzer	Surgeon	Edmonton	General Surgery
Dr. Phil Mitchell	Surgeon	Calgary	General Surgery
Dr. Rob Harrop	Surgeon Section Chief, Plastic Surgery	Calgary	Plastics
Dr. Stephen Cassar	Surgeon	South	Plastics
Dr. William de Haas	Surgeon	Calgary	Plastics
RCV Project Representatives & Partners			
Heidi Stachniak	RCV Co-Lead, Senior Planner, Planning & Performance Provincial Surgery Utilization & ASI	Provincial	AHS RCV Project
Dr. Stewart Hamilton	RCV Co-Lead, Senior Medical Advisor	Provincial	AHS RCV Project
Stacey Litvinchuk	Senior Provincial Director, Provincial Surgery Operations, Alberta Surgical Initiative Lead	Provincial	AHS RCV Project

Member	Title	Zone	Representing
Joe MacGillivray	Managing Director	Calgary	Physician Learning Program (PLP)
Johanna Blaak	Lead Human Centered Design	Calgary	Physician Learning Program (PLP)
Dr. Michelle Bailey	Medical Director, Quality and Practice Improvement, PLP and CME and Professional Development	Calgary	Physician Learning Program (PLP)
Leah Ferrie	Project Manager	Calgary	Physician Learning Program (PLP)
Raymond Wen	Project Manager	Calgary	Physician Learning Program (PLP)
Dr. Don Dick	Senior Medical Director, Improving Health Outcomes Together (IHOT)	Provincial	AHS Improving Health Outcomes Together (IHOT)
Ryan Sommer	Senior Consultant, IHOT	Provincial	AHS Improving Health Outcomes Together (IHOT)