

Prescribing of Stoma Support Garments Position Statement

Hertfordshire and West Essex ICB recommends:

- A maximum of three (level 3) stoma support garments* to be prescribed per patient annually.
- That the patient should purchase level 1 or 2 hernia support belts, girdles, waistbands and underwear.

**Level 3 stoma support garments include hernia support belts, girdles, waistbands and underwear.*

Hernia support belts are not the same as elastic belts. Level 3 hernia support belts, girdles, waistbands and underwear provide abdominal support to reduce the incidence and aid management of parastomal herniation.

For the position statement on elastic belts, please use the following [link](#).

Recommendations

- Only level 3 hernia support belts, girdles, waistbands or underwear should be prescribed.
- Maximum annual quantity of three hernia support belts, OR three girdles OR three waistbands OR underwear to be prescribed per patient (or a combination of these products totalling three).
- Patients exceeding maximum annual quantities should be advised to purchase any additional garments from specialist ostomy manufacturers.
- Level 1 or 2 hernia support belts, girdles, waistbands should be purchased from specialist ostomy manufacturers.
- Patients wanting to wear level 1 or 2 stoma underwear (for comfort and discretion to hide their stoma appliance) can purchase them from a high street store, online or via mail order.
- New patients should only be prescribed a hernia support belt, girdle, waistband or underwear after an assessment by a stoma care nurse.
- If a parastomal hernia is suspected, please refer the patient to their local stoma care nurse.

Rationale

- There is some clinical evidence to support the use of level 3 hernia support belts, girdles, waistbands and underwear for the prevention and management of parastomal hernias.
- Maximum annual quantity based on having one to wear, one in the wash and one for spare.
- There is no clinical evidence for the use of level 1 or 2 hernia support belts, girdles, waistbands or underwear to prevent or manage a parastomal hernia.
- Level 1 and 2 hernia support belts, girdles and waistbands are available to purchase from specialist ostomy manufacturers.
- Level 1 or 2 stoma underwear can be purchased from a high street store, online or via mail order.



Background

- Hernia support belts, girdles and waistbands are not the same as elastic belts.
- Level 3 hernia support belts, girdles, waistbands and underwear provide abdominal support to reduce the incidence and aid management of parastomal herniation.
- A complication of stoma formation is the development of a parastomal hernia, which may occur in 40-50% of patients.
- A parastomal hernia can cause a decrease in a person's quality of life, due to physical discomfort, a highly visible bulge and poor appliance adhesion, leading to leakage of the stoma appliance.
- Limited research recommends that strengthening the abdominal wall by using exercises and support garments can dramatically reduce the incidence of herniation. Should a hernia occur, recommended management options include wearing a level 3 support garment.

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References:

1. Jennie Burch 2018 Nursing strategies for the prevention and management of parastomal hernias GI nursing Vol.16, No2
2. Daniels I (2016) UK Cohort study to investigate prevention of parastomal hernia.
3. PrescQIPP Prescribing guidelines for stoma appliances and accessories

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Developed by	Pharmacy and Medicines Optimisation Team, Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board Stoma Care Clinical Nurse Specialists, West Hertfordshire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust and The Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust. Based on Stoma Hernia Support Belt Position Statement v2 and Stoma Underwear Position Statement v2, both ratified July 2021 (Medicines Optimisation Clinical Leads Group).
Date ratified	V1 May 2023 (Medicines Optimisation & Prescribing Delivery and Implementation Group). V2 Updated SWH Hertsmere contact information.
Review date	The recommendation is based upon the evidence available at the time of publication. This recommendation will be reviewed upon request in the light of new evidence becoming available.

