

Consideration factors for surgery funding requests

General factors



This information has been developed by ACC's Clinical Advisory Panel with the support of the New Zealand Orthopaedic Association (NZOA). It outlines the general factors ACC's Clinical Advisors take into consideration when providing clinical advice regarding the likely causal link between a condition to be surgically treated and an ACC covered accident.

What we use to inform our clinical advice

All surgery funding requests are considered on a case-by-case basis. If there is sufficient information in the Assessment Report and Treatment Plan (ARTP), case owners may be able to make a funding decision without the need to refer to an ACC Clinical Advisor. If a request requires clinical comment, these General Consideration Factors provide a framework for ACC Clinical Advisors to guide their clinical advice.

We base our clinical advice on the information provided in the ARTP and relevant medical information gathered which may include: clinical notes from other treatment providers, imaging and previous medical information for the same body site. This may also include consideration of any additional information provided by the client.

The section on “Causal Medical Link” within the ARTP provides the opportunity for surgeons to explain factors that they think support a causal link between a client’s covered accident and the condition to be treated.

General consideration factors

The following factors are considered by ACC Clinical Advisors for every surgery funding request:

Factor	Considerations
ACC-covered injury	Is there an ACC-covered injury for the body site to be treated?
Timeframe	How much time is there between the date of accident and the date of initial presentation for assessment? If there is a significant delay in seeking treatment, what are the reasons for this (if documented)?
Initial subjective history	What is the contemporaneous clinical record of the subjective history including the: mechanism of accident, degree and type of force involved, initial consequences of the accident, initial signs and symptoms as described by the client and evolution of signs and symptoms since the accident?

Medical, social and occupational history	What is the relevant medical history including: comorbidities, past medical history and family history? What is the relevant occupational history including: work, sporting activities and hobbies?
Initial presentation	What are the objective findings at the initial presentation including: clinical examination and special tests?
Initial diagnosis	What is the initial diagnosis from the lodging provider? What injury code was accepted by ACC for cover?
Imaging	Is relevant imaging available? What are the findings?
Revision of diagnosis with particular consideration of the surgeon's comments in the ARTP	Is there a revised diagnosis and what information influenced this revision? In particular, what is the history described by the surgeon and how does this corroborate with the initial history taken when the client first presented for assessment of their injury? How do the surgeon's examination findings compare with the initial assessment findings? Has the diagnosis changed? What has the surgeon noted in the section on Causal Medical Link?
Natural history	What is the natural history of the condition requiring surgery including: background prevalence, demographics and nature/ quality of evidence?
Analysis and conclusion	Considering all of the factors of the individual case, does the pathology to be treated appear likely to have been caused by the covered accident?