

Information for Clinical Choice Support Document

A review of Cervical Collars Support Document

Introduction

Information for Clinical Choice (ICC) has been developed to assist clinicians in the decision-making process when assessing the suitability of a product by providing a clear illustration and description of the features of a range of similar products supplied through NHS Supply Chain.

The Supporting Documents are the result of a product review, conducted by the Clinical Engagement and Implementation Managers (CEIM), with support from clinical stakeholders across the NHS, as part of our assurance process. Please note this document does not include a product matrix.

The aim, alongside delivering savings back into NHS frontline services, is to ensure that clinical choice remains at the forefront of any product switching decision.

Orthotic Services and Associated Consumables: Cervical Collars

A review of all the cervical collars currently purchased by the NHS has been undertaken to identify common requirements, usage and trends with the aim of capturing opportunities for optimisation and savings.

Cervical Collars reviewed here have been grouped into 3 main product categories,

1. Extrication Collar
2. Semi-Rigid Collar (Medium/Long Term Use)
3. Soft Collar.

The functionality of collars in groups 1 and 2 are to provide spinal stabilisation and inhibit movement thus reducing the risk of further damage, aid recovery and provide patient comfort.

The Soft Collars functionality is to provide cervical support displacing some of the weight from the head, providing relief to the neck muscles and ligaments whilst providing additional patient comfort from reduced movement.

All cervical collars in this review are:

- Latex-Free
- Radiolucent
- MRI and CT compatible.

1. Extrication Collars

Extrication collars are primarily used in the pre-hospital environment by Ambulance Trusts and occasionally in A&E Departments. Often used in conjunction with immobilisation equipment such as spinal boards / scoop stretchers and/or headblocks/pads to prevent further damage to the c-spine during the initial stages of transport & treatment. They come in two types;

Fixed Size

A range of 6 products which cover the full spectrum of patient neck sizes. These are the original cervical collars prior to adjustable collars being developed. Colour coded to identify different sizes.

Accounts for <4% NHS Sales in this group*. Savings in storage and costs available to trusts if they switch to the adjustable collar. E.g., To maintain stock for 2 patients would require 12 collars, compared to 4 adjustable collars.



Adjustable Collar

These are provided in 2 sizes (Adult / Paediatric). They have a sliding mechanism which enable the product to be adjusted to meet the specific patient size with a locking feature to keep in place.

Accounts for 96% of NHS Sales*

(*Analysis of NHS Supply Chain, SCS and Supplier provided information)

2. Semi Rigid (with or without replacement pads)

The Semi-Rigid Collars in this range are designed for longer term wear. Indicated for use post trauma, post-operatively and for patients with medical conditions such as Cervical Spondylosis, Osteoarthritis and Motor Neurone Disease.

Fixed

Similar to the Extrication Collars they come in a variety of sizes (generally up to 6 Adult and 4 Paediatric versions). As they are used for a wider spectrum of patients and for varying lengths of time, some products offer the option of purchasing the front or back pieces separately. Suppliers may provide 2 product versions of a range (with or without replacement pads). This enables the pads which are in contact with the skin to be washed or replaced when worn saving on the cost of replacing the whole collar and providing a better patient and sustainability offering.

Please review your trust usage and requirements as purchasing collar and replacement pads as a unit are better value than purchasing replacements separately should they be required.

Adjustable

An adjustable collar option is available for several product ranges, the usage of these compares to the volumes of the fixed collars but to date only come in an adult size.

These products are used for the medium to long term user and ensuring that they fit and don't accidentally adjust during daily use / cleaning and the changing of pads may account for the continued preference of fixed sizes in some scenarios.

3. Soft Collars

Soft collars are made from a variety of materials from foam to beads. Soft collars can be used for patients with moderate pain for conditions such as whiplash injuries, currently there is a lack of evidence to either support or refute the usage of these products¹ and the use will depend on patient demographics and clinical preference. The range currently accounts for 2% of NHS Sales*. There is a lack of standardisation in how these collars are measured. Some brands refer to sizes and others reference height and/or circumference with no commonality as to what defines e.g. Medium, or Large.

All soft collars have been analysed and grouped according to neck circumference; the secondary descriptions are being updated to include this information.

Soft Collars		
Size	Ref	CM
XXS	1	<35
XS	2	35-39
S	3	40-44
M	4	45-49
L	5	50-54
XL	6	55-59
XXL	7	60-64

Analysis of Spend Comparison Service data and Savings Opportunities

A detailed search was undertaken on Spend Comparison Service identifying Direct Spend and analytics of usage across product ranges. The data we have identified has been used to provide National Impact Analysis which has been sent to the Customer Relationship Managers.

There are several potential switching opportunities available which will be included in the National Impact Analysis these can be capitalised further once the direct spend usage is consolidated with existing Supply Chain.

Please contact your NHS Supply Chain Customer Relationship Manager or Clinical Nurse Advisor for more information.

Reference List

1. Christensen SWM, Rasmussen MB, Jespersen CL, Sterling M, Skou ST. (2021) "Soft-collar use in rehabilitation of whiplash-associated disorders - A systematic review and meta-analysis", *Musculoskeletal Science and Practice*, Volume 55:102426, doi.org/10.1016/j.msksp.2021.102426. (<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2468781221001107>)

If you have any questions, would like further information, or have feedback to share, please contact:

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