

## BOB ICB and Frimley ICB Priorities Committee Clinical Commissioning Policy Statement

Policy Number/ Name	BOBFPC56 Facet Joint Injections and Medial Branch Blocks for Chronic Neck Pain
Date of BOB ICB Adoption	February 2024

The Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and Berkshire West ICB and Frimley ICB Priorities Committee has considered the evidence for the clinical and cost effectiveness of therapeutic and diagnostic facet joint injections and medial branch blocks for the treatment of chronic low back and neck pain.

The Committee concluded that the evidence for clinical and cost effectiveness is inadequate and therefore recommends that facet joint injections and medial branch blocks for diagnostic and therapeutic purposes are **not normally funded**.

Injection of local anaesthetic, steroid or other agents around the primary nerve innervating the facet joint (the medial branch of the posterior primary ramus) is termed a medial branch block. Facet joint injections involve injection of substances into the facet joint itself. Facet joints are small stabilizing joints located between and behind adjacent vertebrae in the spine and are believed to contribute to spinal pain in some cases.

### Primary OPCS codes:

V54.4 Injection around spinal facet of spine  
Y82.1 Nerve block injections  
W90.3 Injection of therapeutic substance into joint

### Secondary OPCS codes: (either will be included after Primary OPCS)

Z66.3 Cervical vertebra  
Z67.3 Cervical intervertebral joint  
Z99.1 Intervertebral disc of cervical spine  
Z06.1 Cervical Spinal cord  
Z07.1 Spinal nerve root of cervical spine

### NOTES:

- Potentially exceptional circumstances may be considered by a patient's ICB where there is evidence of significant health status impairment (e.g. inability to perform activities of daily living) and there is evidence that the intervention sought would improve the individual's health status.
- This policy was developed and recommended by Thames Valley Priorities Committee which was the predecessor of Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and Berkshire West ICB and Frimley ICB Priorities Committee.
- This policy will be reviewed in the light of new evidence or new national guidance, e.g., from NICE.
- BOBFPC clinical policy statements can be viewed at [Clinical Commissioning Policy Statements & IFRs | BOB ICB](#)

<b>Recommendations made by TVPC</b>	January 2016 Reviewed March 2021
<b>Date adopted and issued by OCCG</b>	July 2021
<b>Date of BOB ICB adoption</b>	February 2024 – reformatted and rebadged only