

Policy:	<u>Persistent Non-Specific Low Back Pain</u>		GM Ref:	GM021	
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Policy inclusion criteria

The investigation and management of persistent non-specific low back pain is commissioned in line with NICE CG88. Non-specific low back pain relates to back pain where there is no identifiable cause for the pain.

The following are **NOT** routinely commissioned by the NHS for the management of non-specific low back pain that persists for more than 6 weeks and less than 12 months. Patients in this group should **NOT** be treated with, or referred for:

- Alexander Technique: Although lessons in the Alexander technique are likely to be effective, this is not recommended for provision by the NHS, because exercise is likely to be more cost-effective. However, people may wish to arrange lessons in the Alexander technique for themselves.
- Massage: Although massage may be effective, this is not recommended for provision by the NHS, because other physical interventions are likely to be more cost-effective. However, people may wish to arrange massage for themselves.
- Percutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (PENS).
- Transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS).
- Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs).
- Injections of therapeutic substances into the back (including facet joint injections).
- Laser therapy.
- Interferential therapy.
- Therapeutic ultrasound.
- Lumbar supports.
- Traction.
- Radiofrequency facet joint denervation.
- Intradiscal electrothermal therapy (IDET).
- Percutaneous intradiscal radiofrequency thermocoagulation (PIRFT).
- Neuroreflexive therapy.

Funding mechanism: An individual funding request can be made if there is a good case for clinical exceptionality. Requests should be submitted with all relevant supporting evidence, which must be provided with the request.

Policy exclusions

Where there is a clinical diagnosis for the lower back pain, including degenerative disease, this policy would **NOT** apply. If at any time during the investigation and management of non-specific lower back pain, a specific cause of the pain is suspected it should be investigated and managed appropriately and referred as normal within contract.