

Ref. No: 216
From: Public
Date: 03/01/23
Subject: transvaginal ultrasounds

REQUEST & RESPONSE

1. For what symptoms would a transvaginal ultrasound be indicated?

- Suspected polycystic ovaries
- Postmenopausal bleeding
- Investigation of suspected ectopic pregnancy
- Investigations of suspected Retained Products of Conception (RPOCs)
- For further assessment of pelvic anatomy if the anatomical structures are not visualised adequately on a transabdominal scan.

2. Are there any groups of people a transvaginal ultrasound would not be carried out on? If so, why would they not be indicated?

- Minors – Vaginal penetration of a patient under 16 is illegal and would constitute an assault.
- Patients declining transvaginal scan – Undertaking an intimate examination on a patient without consent would constitute an assault.

3. Does Trust policy indicate that it is allowed to carry out transvaginal ultrasounds on those who have never been sexually active before? If it is not allowed, what is the reasoning behind no sexual contact being a contraindication for these scans?

Virgo intacta is not documented as an absolute contraindication in the gynaecology ultrasound protocol. Patients are given the choice although most of these patients decline a transvaginal examination.

4. If transvaginal ultrasounds are not allowed in your Trust for the 'sexually inactive', what is the justification for this going against the British Medical Ultrasound Society's guidelines, which state: "The concept of virginity plays no part in the clinical decision making for a TVUS" and "if a patient has not had penetrative sex, they are still entitled to be offered, and to accept, a TVUS [transvaginal ultrasound] in the same way that cervical screening is offered to all eligible patients"?

[https://www.bmus.org/static/uploads/resources/Transvaginal Ultrasound Guidance Final With Front Cover MesUP8a.pdf](https://www.bmus.org/static/uploads/resources/Transvaginal%20Ultrasound%20Guidance%20Final%20With%20Front%20Cover%20MesUP8a.pdf)

Please refer to previous answer.

5. What does the Trust define as 'sexual activity'?

Insertion of penis (or other object) into the vagina for the purpose of sexual gratification.

6. Which members of staff in your Trust perform transvaginal ultrasounds?

All sonographers that have undertaken the postgraduate module in gynaecology ultrasound.

7. Have all of those staff members received diversity and inclusion training regarding their patient-facing roles? If so, please detail the nature of the course or programme and number of hours completed.

Yes. Equality and Diversity training delivered by the Trust. Training is delivered in an online format with an assessment at the end of the training. Training is renewed every three years.