



Oestrogen Implant Referral Pathway: GP information

Dear Doctor,

Re: Oestrogen Implant GP Referral Pathway

Rainbow Care Clinic is accepting GP (and self) referrals for oestrogen implants for gender affirming hormonal care. RCC is happy to accept referrals for implant insertion only or for all hormonal care needs.

Rainbow Care Clinic is a Tasmanian, informed consent gender affirming health care service run by myself, Dr Holly Inglis. I am a registered specialist GP with experience in gender affirming hormonal care, including implant insertion. Oestrogen implants are common in NSW where I gained most of my experience and are listed in the 2022 AusPATH Australian Informed Consent Standards of Care for Gender Affirming Hormone Therapy.

What are oestrogen implants?

Oestrogen implants are compounded, sterile pellets of oestradiol which are inserted subdermally over the buttocks or lower abdomen. Implants come in 50 and 100 mg pellets. Typically 1 x 100mg pellet is inserted at each procedure. Response to implants is very idiosyncratic but replacement is usually 4-8 months after the first then every 6-12+ months.

What are the benefits and risks of oestrogen implants?

This information is discussed in detail with the patient during the informed consent process.

The benefits of oestrogen implants for patients include:

- *convenience*, patients not longer have to use a daily medication
- *cost*, in select circumstances implants may be cheaper
- *dose*, some patients can achieve higher doses with implants, noting that RCC adheres to AusPATH oestrogen targets (250-1000 pmol/L) and carefully counsels patients regarding *higher* does not equate to *better*

The usual risks of minor surgical procedures apply to oestrogen insertion, namely, pain, bleeding, bruising, infection, scarring, numbness and allergic reactions. Specific risks include:

- implant extrusion
- high oestrogen levels after repeated implants* and potential for associated symptoms
- tachyphylaxis*
- lack of research with current clinical practice guided by expert experience
- significant variation between individuals and sometimes across implants in the response to implants in terms of feminising effects, symptom management / alleviation, oestrogen levels in the blood and duration of the implant

*Risk is reduced by pre-insertion oestrogen target level < 400 pmol/L for subsequent implants



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What are the costs?

Private fees apply for appointments, implant procedures and the implants themselves. Appointment and implant fees are available on the clinic website. Implants can cost between \$100-200 per 100mg plus postage depending on the pharmacy.

Who are implants suitable for?

Implants are suitable for those who:

- are already on oestrogen
- are on stable or maximum doses of oestrogen in other forms
and
- do not wish to take a daily medication and prefer the convenience of less frequent administration of implants (typically 6-12 monthly), *or*
- do not tolerate other forms of oestrogen, *or*
- unable to achieve therapeutic doses** on other forms of oestrogen
and
- can tolerate a minor medical procedure under local anaesthetic

** Either an oestrogen level < 250 pmol/L OR a poor clinical response to therapy / ongoing virulisation despite max. dosing; RCC carefully counsels patients considering implants that they are NOT associated with any greater breast development compared with other delivery methods, especially if otherwise good clinical response (e.g. reduced hair, changed fat distribution, etc.)

How to refer?

Patients can register for appointments via the website and are sent upload links.

Otherwise please send referrals to:

Healthlink: *rainbowc* (preferred)

Email: admin@rainbowcareclinic.com.au

Fax: (03) 8779 8991

Mail: 71 Bathurst Street, Hobart TAS 7000

Template referrals (PDF, BestPractice) are available on the clinic website:

www.rainbowcareclinic.com.au/information-for-your-gp

Kind Regards,

Dr Holly Inglis (she/her)

BSc(Adv) MBBS MMed FRACGP

Rainbow Care Clinic www.rainbowcareclinic.com.au



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Rainbow Care Clinic GP Referral for Oestrogen Implants

Best Practice templates available for download: www.rainbowcareclinic.com.au/information-for-your-gp

Patient Details

Name:		DOB:	
Medicare / legal name:		Gender identity/ pronouns:	
Email:		Phone:	

I confirm that my patient:

- is already on oestrogen
- is on a stable or maximum dose of current oestrogen

AND

- does not wish to take a daily medication / prefers the convenience of implants, OR
- does not tolerate other forms of oestrogen OR
- is unable to achieve therapeutic oestrogen levels (oestrogen level < 250 nmol/L, poor clinical response or ongoing virulisation)

AND

- can tolerate a minor medical procedure under local anaesthetic that causes a small scar

Ongoing care

- I am referring for the purposes of oestrogen implant insertion only
- I am referring for all gender affirming hormonal care needs, I will continue (or this clinic will continue) as their primary care provider for all other primary health care needs

Clinical Details & Examination

Please include (can attach as separate document):

- Patient medical background and gender affirming hormonal care treatment history
- Recent BP
- Recent BMI (if patient consents)
- Recent FBC, EUC, LFTs, oestrogen & testosterone levels (where possible but RCC can arrange)

Oestrogen history

Current oestrogen type & dose:	
Most recent oestrogen level:	
Most recent testosterone level:	
Reason for change to implant:	

Referring GP	<i>GP stamp</i>
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