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Dear Alana

Review of Health Technology Appraisal Number 17 – Laparoscopic surgery for the treatment of colorectal cancer – Appraisal Consultation Document

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Health Technology Appraisal - Laparoscopic surgery for the treatment of colorectal cancer – Appraisal Consultation Document

The Department of Health wishes to make the following comments:

Para 1.2 – Is there an issue that by leaving the mode and mechanisms for deciding on definitions of 'appropriate training' and 'sufficient frequency' to local networks and professional bodies. There might be high levels of local variation in practice?

Para 1.3 last bullet- Would you please clarify whether this means surgeons are to be mandated to discuss with the patient their experience in both procedures and, if so, in what degree of detail?

Para 9.2 – Clinical colleagues suggest it might be more appropriate if this guidance could be considered for review in September 2008.

Appendix C – It would be helpful if you could consider making the recommendations more stronger on audit, particularly for conversion rates. If audit criteria is to be set locally, the resulting data might be difficult to compare. Clinical colleagues suggest that you might wish to consider allowing the criteria to be determined by some form of a joint sub committee of the Association of Coloproctology of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Association of Laparoscopic Surgeons.

I hope these comments are helpful.

Yours sincerely

Simon Reeve
Head of Clinical and Cost Effectiveness