

23 June 2025

Amputation Guidance and Training for Staff

What guidance and/or training the Belfast Trust has in place for staff on the deciding an amputation is required and how this should then be delivered to the patient. I have found some very useful information online regarding the sensitivities of delivering such life changing news and I am curious what policy or guidance the trust has in place to ensure this is done with care and sensitivity.

There is no specific training provided for amputation. Amputation surgical training is given a part of core surgical medical training. The decision to undertake a major amputation is made by a multidisciplinary team (MDT) including vascular surgery, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, diabetology, radiology, specialist nursing and an amputation/discharge co-ordinator. The multidisciplinary team discuss the level of amputation to ensure best function for the patient post operatively if there is a choice of amputation level.

The medical staff discuss with the patient initially to explain why amputation is required. There are no specific policies within the trust around delivering bad news. There are Schwartz rounds where health professionals can discuss their experiences of giving bad news for learning purposes and a document with advice and tips around breaking bad news, but no policies or mandatory training.

The medical team then refer the amputation co-ordinator to discuss the amputee pathway including the practical and functional side of having an amputation as it was recognised by the NCEPOD that this role is required to help patients understand the pathway once this news has been given.