

# The Royal College of Podiatry Statement on Podiatric Surgery

Podiatric surgery services in the United Kingdom are independently led by Consultant Podiatric Surgeons and their teams within the NHS. Podiatric surgery has been offered by the NHS for more than 40 years and a variety of system service delivery models exist. Today podiatric surgery services may be in either community settings or the more traditional acute sector, typically hosted by NHS Trusts or social enterprises. Podiatric surgeons are HCPC registered podiatrists with additional annotation on the HCPC register as a 'podiatrist practising podiatric surgery'. Annotation ensures that podiatric surgeons meet the necessary HCPC standards at the threshold level necessary to protect members of the public<sup>1</sup>.

Podiatric surgeons provide assessment, diagnosis and surgical management of the bones, joints and soft tissues of the foot, ankle, and related structures<sup>2</sup>. Podiatric surgeons work autonomously with their clinical caseload, as well as within larger multidisciplinary teams.

The Royal College of Podiatry supports the further development of podiatric surgery services to help support the elective recovery plan<sup>3</sup>. It is recognised by the College, in recently published guidance, that Podiatric Surgeons have a key role as part of the national response to recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, by helping to reduce elective waits through better utilisation of their services. The College has been working with NHS England/ NHS Improvement to identify where there is flexibility and capacity within healthcare systems to play a major role in reducing the now substantial elective waits for routine foot surgery<sup>4</sup>.



Prof. Paul Chadwick FCPM  
**Clinical Director, Clinical Leadership & Education**  
Royal College of Podiatry

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2. Health Education England, n.d., *Podiatric Surgery*. Accessed 8 November 2022. <https://tinyurl.com/y5x9p5z6>
3. NHS England. (2022). *Delivery plan for tackling the COVID-19 backlog of elective care*. Accessed 8 November 2022. [www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2022/02/C1466-delivery-plan-for-tackling-the-covid-19-backlog-of-elective-care.pdf](http://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2022/02/C1466-delivery-plan-for-tackling-the-covid-19-backlog-of-elective-care.pdf)
4. Royal College of Podiatry. (2021). *The College of Podiatry proposes solution to foot surgery waiting lists*. Accessed 8 November 2022. <https://rcpod.org.uk/news-and-features/press-releases/the-college-of-podiatry-proposes-solution-to-foot-surgery-waiting-lists>