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# Private Hospital Reports Surge in Breast Reduction Demand Due to NHS Crisis

### Manchester Private Hospital claims the increase in breast reduction surgeries is due to the NHS’ backlog and funding crises.

Officials from a private hospital in Manchester specialising in cosmetic surgery have blamed a sudden surge in demand for breast reduction procedures on the current backlog and funding crises within the NHS.

Officials from [Manchester Private Hospital](https://manchesterprivatehospital.uk/) have been inundated with requests over the last 12 months. And as the NHS continues to prioritise its core services, the Salford-based clinic expects demand for the life-changing procedures to continue rising over the next few years.

According to [BMA statistics](https://www.bma.org.uk/advice-and-support/nhs-delivery-and-workforce/pressures/nhs-backlog-data-analysis), more than seven million people were waiting for NHS treatments in October 2022. As breast reduction surgery is rarely viewed as urgent, there’s little hope for most women seeking the procedure from the NHS anytime soon.

While some might view the need for this drastic form of cosmetic surgery as frivolous, it is anything but for the thousands of women who live with excessively large breasts.

The back, neck and shoulder pain caused by large breasts is debilitating for many sufferers. There are also significant practical and psychological issues associated with the problem.

For years, the most serious cases were granted NHS treatment. But the current crisis means that long-suffering women are being forced to turn to private clinics for the treatment they need.

One of the biggest complaints among sufferers is the seemingly arbitrary approach to NHS breast reductions. Decisions on whether to offer surgery on the NHS often depend on issues such as geography and BMI ratings — rather than the needs of the individual.

[One woman](https://www.leicestermercury.co.uk/news/real-life/woman-refused-nhs-breast-reduction-7758888) from Sheffield was rejected for breast reduction surgery by the NHS twice. This was despite the fact that her size K breasts were too large for any standard bra on sale today. Even a five-stone weight loss wasn’t enough to change the minds of NHS managers. She is now raising funds to get the surgery she needs privately.

A mother and daughter in Scotland experienced very different responses when they both requested breast reduction surgery with the NHS. In 2022, a 35-year-old [midwife](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-10661163/Sally-breast-reduction-free-NHS-did-daughter-Ellie-pay-6-000-hers.html) was forced to pay for breast reduction surgery at a private hospital.

Another surgery reduced the size of her breasts from 36J to 34E — a transformation that changed her life. But years earlier, her mother was able to undergo the same breast reduction surgery with the NHS.

This women story is all too familiar during these days of changing NHS priorities. She was placed on the NHS waiting list at the age of 18, but she was later removed when managers changed the criteria for those eligible. Overnight, she was deemed too large for surgery — with a BMI of 30. Eventually, Her husband used a work bonus to pay for private breast reduction surgery.

The NHS’ breast reduction lottery took a different turn in November last year when a [woman from Essex](https://www.essexlive.news/news/essex-news/witham-mums-agony-nhs-says-7776628) was denied NHS treatment because her 32GG breasts were deemed too small for reduction surgery on four separate occasions. This, despite the fact that the woman’s small frame was unable to cope with the weight — leading to chronic pain, immobility and deteriorating posture.

The number of requests for breast reductions on the NHS is rising just at the time the organisation is facing its most serious backlog and funding crisis in its history. And that’s leading to a huge increase in private surgeries across the country.

While the demand for breast augmentations seems to be diminishing over time, the demand for breast reductions remains constant. There are many reasons for this, including the desire to stay fit and wear exercise garments. But the main reasons seem to relate to mental health and lower-back pain.

According to a 2020 BMJ study, breast reduction surgery was found to ‘significantly improve the quality of life’ of the women involved. Yet the NHS seems determined to make the procedure impossible to get without turning to a private hospital.

According to official NHS guidelines, women must show they have a medical need for breast reduction surgery. Acceptable needs include, back, shoulder and neck pain, skin problems and mental health problems such as depression and severe anxiety. Unfortunately, some NHS trusts have applied arbitrary BMI limits on patients.

Mr Graeme Hughes of the Manchester Private Hospital believes the ability for patients to get breast reduction [surgery](https://manchesterprivatehospital.uk/cosmetic-surgery/breast-reduction-surgery/) with the NHS has become a postcode lottery. He said:

“More and more desperate women are turning to us for the life-changing breast reduction surgery they need. While we take great pride in transforming so many lives, we feel for the women who are forced to pay for surgeries other women are getting for free with the NHS.

“People shouldn’t underestimate the pain and mental anguish excessively large breasts can cause. The work our plastic surgeons do in this area literally changes lives.

“We believe the NHS should set out clear and consistent qualifying criteria for breast reduction surgery across England. That way, patients won’t have to worry about postcode lotteries and wasting time seeking treatment from their local trust.

“There are some incredible private breast reduction clinics in the UK today. And while these essential procedures aren’t cheap, they’re well worth the expense when you see the effects they have on patients’ lives.”

With the NHS crisis showing no signs of abating, it seems even more women will have to turn to private cosmetic surgery providers for the life-changing breast reduction surgery they need.

## About Manchester Private Hospital

Manchester Private Hospital is a state-of-the-art healthcare facility specialising in a range of cosmetic surgeries and treatments. This highly respected Salford institution enjoys a fantastic reputation for its expertise and professionalism in the fields of breast augmentation surgery, tummy tucks, facelifts and liposuction.

## Contact Manchester Private Hospital

For press-related enquiries and interview requests, please call Mr Graeme Hughes at Manchester Private Hospital on 0161 507 8822. Alternatively, send your query or questions via email to info@manchesterprivatehospital.co.uk