

Project scope: Surgical Care Practitioners (SCPs)

May 2025

Research question(s)

What is the clinical effectiveness, cost effectiveness, safety, and patient experience associated with integrating Surgical Care Practitioners (SCPs) into multidisciplinary surgical teams for the delivery of selected non-complex, high-volume surgical procedures, spanning the entire care pathway from referral to discharge?

Inclusion criteria

The selection of studies for inclusion in the literature review element of the project will be based on the following criteria:

Population	People requiring low complexity surgical procedures
Intervention	The inclusion of a SCP in the surgical patient pathway
Comparator	Current standard of care - the current workforce model with no SCP
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ all clinical outcomes reported in the literature ■ all other outcomes relating to efficiencies, for example impact on waiting times and patient satisfaction ■ patient perceptions and experience ■ safety, including any data relating to surgical complications and quality of care ■ cost effectiveness or other economic outcomes
Setting	Anywhere in the patient pathway (from referral through to discharge) for people undergoing a high-volume, low-complexity surgical procedure. This includes initial consultations, outpatient settings, clinical settings and follow-up consultations (remotely or face-to-face)
Limits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ English language only ■ Studies that are applicable to the context in NHSScotland

Planned activities

SHTG have agree to the following activities to support an SHTG Assessment on SCPs:

1. A comprehensive search, critical appraisal, and synthesis of the literature on the clinical effectiveness, cost effectiveness, safety, and patient perspectives related to the integration of SCPs into the surgical workforce.

2. Engagement with clinical experts through peer review.
3. Development of a plain language version of the SHTG Assessment.

SHTG have also agreed to undertake the following activities, subject to data availability:

4. Analysis of real-world data from existing SCP services within NHSScotland. This will include a focused review of a small selection of outcomes (such as time to treatment and total volume of procedures) depending on the availability and quality of the data.
5. Development of an economic and/or cost model for NHSScotland (the type of model will depend on data availability). The modelling work will focus on the services that already exist within NHSScotland.

End products

At the end of the project, SHTG will publish:

- An SHTG Assessment
- A plain language summary

Timescales (approximate)

Final draft to be ready by the end of November