
What is the clinical and cost effectiveness of dynamic elastomeric fabric orthoses (DEFOs) for cerebral palsy?

Calvert J, Kelly J

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Authors' conclusions

Summary. This scoping report identified limited clinical and no cost-effectiveness evidence on this topic. Although two systematic reviews published subsequently to NHS QIS EN11 were identified, neither included additional studies. The reviews found that splinting may improve functional abilities in some children with CP. Results from an RCT (with some shortcomings) on upper limb splints in CP suggested that lycra® is a beneficial intervention which is most effective when worn for a period of time (3 months), with small carryover effects on removal of the splint. However this was a small study (n=16) and so the results should be treated with caution. Synthesis of the literature is difficult due to the differences in the types of orthoses worn (eg glove/body suit), manufacturers' designs, types of CP in clinical samples and outcomes measured. Further research, with larger numbers, longer follow ups and homogeneity in terms of type of garment and manufacturers' design, is required to determine the effects of lycra® splinting in CP. No evidence was identified in relation to adults with CP. The evidence base is limited in amount and in quality with little development since the publication of EN 11.

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Address for correspondence

Healthcare Improvement Scotland, Delta House, 50 West Nile Street, Glasgow, G1 2NP Tel: 0141 225 6998 Email: doreen.pedlar@nhs.net

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