

Guidance for Clinicians regarding Suspected Cauda Equina Syndrome

A large iceberg floating in the ocean. The tip of the iceberg is visible above the water surface, while the much larger, jagged base is submerged underwater. The water is a deep blue color.

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Educational and Operational Document

Includes guidance for Patients

Guidance Document

- Red Flag Symptoms = MRI (Urgent)
- Red Flag Signs = MRI (Emergency)
- Standardised Documentation
- 'Trained & Experienced' decision maker
- Guidance/information for Patients

Level of objectivity

- Sensitivity of clinical examination
 - to rule out CES
 - Unknown and probably poor
- No test to rule out
- ‘Bladder scanner’ & DRE helpful / unhelpful

Clinical Risk Management

- Inherent risk of 'delay in diagnosis'
- Risk mitigation
 1. All patients with CES symptoms = MRI (next available)
 2. Trained decision maker
 3. All patients informed with written advice
- 1. All patients with CES signs = MRI (emergency)

Summary / Outcomes

- Increased demand MRI
- Increased demand on Emergency Departments
- Community clinicians need guidance support
 - bladder scanning & DRE
- Pathways - Dependent on MRI availability