

Eligibility criteria for left atrial appendage occlusion

Southern Cross will only reimburse the cost of a left atrial appendage occlusion under a member's policy when all the following criteria are met:

1. The patient has non-valvular atrial fibrillation
2. High risk of stroke defined as CHADS-VASc ≥ 3
3. Contraindication to long term anticoagulation, which is as defined meeting one of these categories:
 - a) **Bleeding risk:**
 - Previous life-threatening bleeding
 - OR**
 - Chronic anemia secondary to bleeding requiring blood transfusion
 - OR**
 - Specialist assessment identifying relevant bleeding risk and confirming contraindication for oral anticoagulants (OAC) or novel oral anticoagulants (NOAC) (most commonly intracranial bleeding risk)
 - b) **Stroke or embolic event or recurrent left atrial appendage thrombus, in spite of:**
 - Treatment with OAC (warfarin)
 - OR**
 - Treatment with NOAC (dabigatran)
 - c) **Drug intolerance:**
 - Intolerance affecting activities of daily living
 - AND**
 - Adequate trial of OAC (warfarin)
 - AND**
 - Adequate trial of NOAC (dabigatran)