



Ref: FOIA Reference 2018/19-668

Royal Stoke University Hospital
Quality, Safety and Compliance Department
Newcastle Road
Stoke-on-Trent
Staffordshire
ST4 6QG

Date: 25th March 2019

Email foi@uhnm.nhs.uk

Dear

I am writing in response to your email dated 7th February 2019 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding debt collection firms and overseas patients. I apologise for the delay to your response.

As of 1st November 2014 University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust (UHNM) manages two hospital sites – Royal Stoke University Hospital, and County Hospital (Stafford). Therefore the response below is for the two sites combined from that date where appropriate.

Q1 Has the Trust used private debt collection firms to recoup money owed by overseas visitors, migrants and former UK residents who were charged for NHS healthcare treatment by the Trust?

A1 Yes

**Q2 Has the Trust sold debts owed by overseas visitors, migrants and former UK residents - who were charged for NHS healthcare treatment by the Trust - to private debt collection firms?
If the answer to questions 1 and 2 is 'No', the Trust need not process the remainder of this request.**

A2 No

Q3 Which private debt collection firms has the Trust used for the purposes referred to in question 1?

A3 Knights Solicitors and CCI Credit Management Ltd

Q4 Which private debt collection firms has the Trust sold debts to as per question 2?

A4 Not applicable

**Q5 5a. The debts of how many overseas visitors, migrants and former UK residents (excluding private patients) did the Trust pass on or sell to private debt collection firms each calendar year for 2016, 2017 and 2018?
5b. Please state the combined debt owed for each year's referrals/sales as per question 5a**

A5 Please see below:

5a. The following number of debts were passed on to private debt collection firms:-

- 2016 = 11
- 2017 = 5
- 2018 = 65

5b. The combined debt owed for each year's referrals is:-

- 2016 = £179,279.13
- 2017 = £9,655.20
- 2018 = £115,576.14

Q6 What value of the debts referred to each year in response to question 5b has been recouped to date?

A6 Please see below:

The value of debts recouped to date:-

- 2016 = £7,603.83
- 2017 = NIL
- 2018 = £20,039.18

Q7 Please provide any information the Trust holds on the conditions the patients referred to in response to question 5a were treated for (this may be provided as categories of healthcare, such as ENT and nephrology), or alternatively the treatments that were subject to the imposed charges (these may be grouped into over-arching categories for data protection reasons)

A7 Please see below:

Year	Specialty	Total
2016	General Surgery	308.00
2016	Maxillofacial	29,302.31
2016	Neuro Surgery	9,219.00
2016	Neurology	101,888.94
2016	Neurosurgery	7,257.00
2016	Obstetrics Other	16,803.10
2016	Stroke	6,181.78
2016	Urology	8,319.00
2016 Total		179,279.13
2017	Gastroenterology	1,601.96
2017	Medicine	162.00
2017	Obstetrics Other	7,891.24
2017 Total		9,655.20
2018	Ambulatory Care	95.48
2018	Cardiology	11,766.42
2018	Clinical Haematology	335.74

Year	Specialty	Total
2018	Endocrinology	860.89
2018	ENT	184.80
2018	Gastroenterology	2,047.24
2018	General Medicine	7,482.10
2018	General Surgery	7,404.58
2018	Gynaecology	4,018.00
2018	Imaging	591.24
2018	Infectious Diseases	4,521.60
2018	Maxillo Facial	1,062.64
2018	Neurology	536.90
2018	Obstetrics Other	36,178.40
2018	Oral Surgery	198.66
2018	Paediatrics	1,215.10
2018	Plastics	1,720.29
2018	Respiratory	1,372.18
2018	Stroke Medicine	3,138.00
2018	Trauma	25,840.71
2018	Urology	5,005.17
2018 Total		115,576.14
Grand Total		304,510.47

Q8 Please state what policies the Trust operates (or requires debt collection firms to operate) with regard to safeguarding vulnerable individuals when transferring or selling to debt collection firms the debts of overseas visitors, migrants and former UK residents who were charged for NHS healthcare treatment by the Trust.

A8 Please refer to the attached policy.

*Please note that any individuals identified do not give consent for their personal data to be processed for the purposes of direct marketing.

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This letter confirms the completion of this request. A log of this request and a copy of this letter will be held by the Trust.

If you have any queries related to the response provided please in the first instance contact my office.

Should you have a complaint about the response or the handling of your request, please also contact my office to request a review of this. If having exhausted the Trust's FOIA complaints process you are still not satisfied, you are entitled to approach the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and request an assessment of the manner in which the Trust has managed your request.

The Information Commissioner may be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF or via www.ico.org.uk.

If following review of the responses I can be of any further assistance please contact my secretary on 01782 676474.

Yours,



Leah Carlisle
Deputy Head of Quality, Safety & Compliance