



Ref: FOIA Reference 2019/20-163

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

Date: 17th July 2019

Email foi@uhn.nhs.uk

Dear

I am writing in response to your email dated 20th June 2019 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding outpatient appointments.

I can neither confirm nor deny whether some of the information you have requested is held by the Trust in its entirety. This is because the information requested in question 2 is not held centrally, but may be recorded in individual health records. In order to confirm whether this information is held we would therefore have to individually access all health records within the Trust and extract the information where it is present. We therefore estimate that complying with your request is exempt under section 12 of the FOI Act: *cost of compliance is excessive*. The section 12 exemption applies when it is estimated a request will take in excess of 18 hours to complete. We estimate that accessing and reviewing all health records and then extracting relevant information would take longer than the 18 hours allowed for.

In addition to the section 12 exemption the Trust is also applying section 14 (1) exemption: *oppressive burden on the authority*

Under section 16 of the FOI Act we are required to provide requestors with advice and assistance where possible. We would therefore like to advise you that we can comply with your request within the 18 hour timeframe if part of question 2 is reduced to information that is held centrally. In order to avoid further delay to your response we have provided this below.

On 1st July 2019 we contacted you via email as we required clarification on what you meant by 'missed appointment', is that they did not attend or missed the appointment due to been late and the consultant was unable to see them.

On 5th July 2019 you replied via email with the following:
"We mean did not attend."

On the same day we contacted you via email as we required further clarification on Q2, what did you mean by "discharge from follow-up" – is it those who have been discharged back to the GP because they did not attend regardless whether they are attending a new appointment or a follow-up appointment?

You replied via email:

"You are indeed correct. Patients who have been discharged back to their GP because of a DNA is exactly what we require"

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 I'm a reporter for [REDACTED] and I'm looking into secondary care workload being passed onto primary care and would like a few questions to be answered under the Freedom of Information Act.

Please could you provide answers to each separate question covering the following time periods?

**The first covering the time period 1st January 2015 – 31st December 2015;
The second covering the time period 1st January 2016 – 31st December 2016;
The third covering the time period 1st January 2017 – 31st December 2017;
and the fourth covering the time period 1st January 2018 – 31st December 2018.**

1. How many patients missed outpatient appointments in each time period?

A1 Please see below, note, the information supplied in based on the clarification received.

- 1st January 2015 – 31st December 2015 = 61502
- 1st January 2016 – 31st December 2016 = 67317
- 1st January 2017 – 31st December 2017 = 70157
- 1st January 2018 – 31st December 2018 = 73226

Q2 For each of the time periods, how many patients that missed their outpatient appointment did the Trust discharge from follow-up?

A2 The information supplied in based on the clarification received "*Patients who have been discharged back to their GP because of a DNA is exactly what we require*"

From January 2017 the Trust implemented a new Patient Administration System (PAS) system from which new appointment outcomes were implemented, including one which is "Discharge to GP", prior to this 2 generic outcomes were used "DNA - First Activity Discharged" and "DNA - Subsequent Activity Discharged". To fully understand how many are truly discharged back to the GP, each clinic outcome letter whose outcome is one of these would need to be checked – section 12 and 14 exemptions as detailed above.

- 1st January 2015 – 31st December 2015 = 54527 (discharged from the service)
- 1st January 2016 – 31st December 2016 = 61025 (discharged from the service)
- 1st January 2017 – 31st December 2017 = 124 (discharge to GP), 37539 (discharged from the service)
- 1st January 2018 – 31st December 2018 = 219 (discharge to GP), 36206 (discharged from the service)

Q3 What is the Trust's policy on re-referrals when a patient does not attend an outpatient appointment? Please provide all relevant documents.

A3 Details can be found in the Trust's Access Policy G05 section 8.8 (attached)

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

UHNM NHS Trust is a public sector body and governed by EU law. FOI requestors should note that any new Trust requirements over the EU threshold will be subject to these regulations and will be advertised for open competition accordingly.

Where the Trust owns the copyright in information provided, you may re-use the information in line with the conditions set out in the Open Government Licence v3 which is available at <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/>. Where information was created by third parties, you should contact them directly for permission to re-use the information.

An anonymised copy of this request can be found on the Trust's disclosure log, please note that all requests can be found at the following link: <http://www.uhnm.nhs.uk/aboutus/Statutory-Policies-and-Procedures/Pages/Freedom-of-Information-Disclosure-Log.aspx>

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.

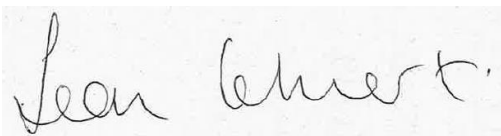
Should you have a complaint about the response or the handling of your request, please also contact my office to request a review of this. If having exhausted the Trust's FOIA complaints process you are still not satisfied, you are entitled to approach the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and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



Jean Lehnert
Information Governance Manager



University Hospitals
of North Midlands
NHS Trust

