



Ref: FOIA Reference 2018/19-016

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

Date: 17<sup>th</sup> April 2018

Tel: 01782 676474  
Email [foi@uhn.nhs.uk](mailto:foi@uhn.nhs.uk)

Dear

I am writing in response to your email dated 9<sup>th</sup> April 2018 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding disciplinary proceedings over NHS staff using social media or instant messaging.

As of 1<sup>st</sup> 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 am writing with a request under the Freedom of Information Act. I would like this information for the calendar year to date, 2017, 2016, 2015, 2014 and 2013.**

**Please can you tell me?**

**\*How many people working at the trust have been subject to disciplinary proceedings for their use of instant messaging apps (e.g. WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, Snapchat)?**

A1 Information not held prior to 2016; data relating to formal investigations was not recorded in a central system. Details of any disciplinary action taken would have been retained on a person's confidential personnel file for the relevant period as set out in the Trust's Disciplinary Policy. Records of informal investigations are not recorded centrally.

We are unable to provide the information you require in the requested format as to release this data could lead to the identification of the person(s) involved due to the low numbers involved, and would breach the Trusts obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998. Accordingly, this aspect of your request is exempt from disclosure under the terms of Section 40(2) of the Act: *Personal information*. However as the Trust is committed to openness and transparency we can band the numbers of allegations for the past 3 years.

- 2016 = less than 5 cases
- 2017 = less than 5 cases
- 2018 = 0

**Q2 How many people working at the Trust have been subject to disciplinary proceedings for their use of social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)?**

- A2 As answer 1, however please note that we do not distinguish between “use of instant messaging apps” and “use of social media”.
- Q3 Please tell me, for each case, the job title of the staff member concerned (e.g. junior doctor, consultant, nurse, administrative staff) and which sanctions were applied (e.g. dismissal, formal warning, referral to professional regulator).**
- A3 As answer 1, however: We are unable to provide the information you require in the requested format as to release this data could lead to the identification of the person(s) involved due to the low numbers involved, and would breach the Trusts obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998. Accordingly, this aspect of your request is exempt from disclosure under the terms of Section 40(2) of the Act. However as the Trust is committed to openness and transparency we can band the sanctions applied for the past 3 years:

	2016	2017	2018
<b>Sanctions</b>			
No case to answer	0	<5	0
Recorded Discussion	<5	0	0
Final written warning	<5	<5	0
Summary dismissal	<5	0	0
<b>Staff Groups</b>			
Estates and Ancillary	<5	<5	0
Administrative & Clerical	<5	<5	0
Additional Clinical Services	<5	0	0
Nursing & Midwifery	0	<5	0

\*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.***

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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](http://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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, loopy initial 'M' followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Mojgan Casillas  
**Interim Information Governance Manager**

Dear Sir / Madam,

In an effort to improve the service provided by the University Hospital of North Midlands UHNM Trust, we would like to hear about your experiences of the service provided by the Freedom of Information request team. This information will be used to monitor the quality of our responses to Freedom of Information requests and improve this in the future.

Please could you fill out our Freedom of Information Satisfaction Survey and let us know about your experience. Any information you provide will be anonymous, however, if you are not happy with the service we provided and wish us to review your case please add your Freedom of Information request reference number and email address at the end of the survey for us to respond.

1) How well did the response answer your request?

Fully  Mostly  Partly  Not at all

2) Did you receive your requested information within 20 working days?

Yes  No

3) What was the overall quality of service provided?

Very good  Good  Satisfactory  Poor

4) Is there anything we could do to improve the service provided in the future?

Thank you for your help.

Information Governance Team

Please reply to [foi@uhnm.nhs.uk](mailto:foi@uhnm.nhs.uk)