



Ref: FOIA Reference 2019/20-514

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

Date: 18th December 2019

Email foi@uhn.nhs.uk

Dear

I am writing in response to your email dated 17th November 2019 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding radiotherapy treatment sessions

On 3rd December 2019 we contacted you via email for proof of identity;

The FOI Act clearly states that if we suspect that the request has come from a Pseudonym we are entitled to request proof of the person's identity, as provision of a Pseudonym invalidates a request, therefore please can you provide a photo copy of your driver's licence or other official document that validates your identity. We also stated that we had received another FOI on the same subject under a different name and email that we believed had come from you.

You replied via email the following:

"Yes I am sorry I explained this to someone from another NHS Trust this morning who was asking the same question.

It was an attempt to avoid going over the threshold for the maximum amount that can be spent on one trust. Please feel free to process the requests together and I sincerely apologise for any additional burden this has caused so far".

We replied via email that under section 12 of the FOI Act we were aggregating these requests on rescheduled radiotherapy treatment sessions and radiotherapy machines.

You replied via email with:

"I am fine with that. Apologies for any extra time expended thus far."

On 12th December 2019 we contacted you via email as we required the following clarification:

Q1 Please could you clarify the requirement to merge linac repair with linac maintenance, and what length of time are you attributing to a "session"?

You replied via email the following:

"I am happy if you give repairs and maintenance figures separately or together, whatever is easiest. A treatment session would be a patient's appointment to receive radiotherapy treatment. I hope this provides clarity".

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 How many radiotherapy treatment sessions were rescheduled due to the linear accelerator(linac) they were due to be treated in being out of service for repairs or maintenance.

A1 No patients missed their treatment “session” due to maintenance.

For repairs, this data is annualised. Using data from the last, full annualised report (1/4/18 to 31/3/19), 480 “sessions” would have required rearranging due to breakdowns. These would have been given later in that day post fix, or at the weekend.

Q2 In the last calendar year to date 26/11/2019, for each radiotherapy machine(Linac) of the radiotherapy machines that were commissioned for service for the entire period, how many days was each machine out of service for more than half of the standard working day for repairs or maintenance;

A2 For the dates specified, we had 2 machines commissioned for the complete period.

Linac 4 was out of service 4 days; linac 3 was out of service 2 days.

Q3 And, for each machine of the radiotherapy machines that were commissioned for service for the entire period specified, what proportion did these days(in which the machine in question was out of service for repairs and maintenance for more than half of the standard working day) comprise of the total number of days the machine, had it not been being repaired or maintained, would have been able to treat patients if staffed(excluding days which were not staffed to provide radiotherapy – for instance, some Trusts won’t have staffing arrangement on weekends and bank holidays, so those days should be omitted when calculating this ratio).

A3 All 6 lost linac days stated in Q2 could have been used for treatment if the machines were not broken.

*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.

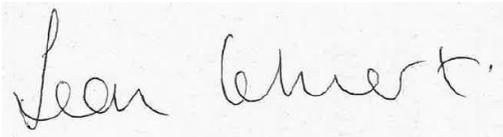
Should you have a complaint about the response or the handling of your request, please also contact my office to request a review of this. If having exhausted the Trust's FOIA complaints process you are still not satisfied, you are entitled to approach the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and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