

Ref: FOIA Reference 2020/21-83

Royal Stoke University Hospital
Data, Security and Protection
Newcastle Road
Stoke-on-Trent
Staffordshire
ST4 6QG

Date: 6th July 2020

Email foi@uhn.nhs.uk

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing in response to your email dated 9th June 2020 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding mental health patients

On our acknowledgment we added the following statement:

The University Hospitals of North Midlands Trust is committed to the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

However, the NHS is facing unprecedented challenges relating to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic at the current time. Understandably, our resources have been diverted to support our front-line colleagues who are working tremendously hard to provide care for our patients, and to those in need of our services.

We strive to be transparent and to work with an open culture. But at this time, whilst care of our patients and the safety of our staff takes precedent, it is likely that responses to some requests for information will be delayed. We apologise for this position in advance, and will endeavour to provide you with as much information as we can, as soon as we are able.

The Information Commissioners Office has recognised the current situation in the NHS.

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 am a reporter for Sky News and I'm requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Please could you let me know?

- 1. Where mental health patients arriving at your Trust's hospital(s) or A&E department(s) are asked to wait before being assessed and whether this is in an area where patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 are.**

A1 This will depend on whether the patient attending is categorised as red or green pending their presenting symptoms. Face masks are provided to the patients when arriving in the Emergency Department and all staff follow the appropriate PPE guidance for this area

Q2 Are waiting/assessment areas completely separate, with their own access and exit areas and other facilities including but not exclusively toilets?

A2 There are separate entrances and waiting rooms for red / green patients pending which route they are streamed through. Patients are assessed in individual cubicles

Q3 Are mental health patients given PPE if asked to walk through COVID-19 contaminated areas?

A3 Yes, the appropriate PPE will be provided to patients

Q4 What is the policy to determine whether an arriving mental health patient should be treated in a COVID-19 zone?

A4 PHE guidance is followed to determine whether a patient needs to be directed through the red or green pathway (temperature, new persistent cough)

Q5. Are patients arriving given any warning about the increased risk of COVID-19 infection from hospital? What measures are in place for patients who lack capacity to understand and consent to these warnings?

This is in relation to sites operating from February 2020 to the present day.

A5 Please see below:

- Controller role at the entrance to ED
- All patients are given masks
- Patients are streamed to the red / green pathway pending their presenting symptoms.
- Social distancing within the waiting areas
- Single rooms for patients that lack capacity whom could be either a risk to themselves or others

*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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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 671612.

Yours,



Jean Lehnert
Data, Security & Protection Manager