

Ref: FOIA Reference 2020/21-100

Date: 22nd July 2020

Email foi@uhn.nhs.uk

Dear

I am writing in response to your email dated 2nd July 2020 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding Cataract Surgery

On 6th July 2020 we contacted you via email as you had addressed your request to University Hospitals North Manchester

On the same day you replied via email with confirmation that it was UHNM your required information from.

On the same day we contacted you via email as we required the following clarifications:

Q1 - What was the number of Cataract surgeries undertaken per month from Feb 2019 to March 2020? – is this all types of Cataract Surgery or a specific type of surgery?

Q2 - What was the Waiting Time from referral to treatment per month from Feb 2019 to March 2020? – Is this for Cataract Surgery as it doesn't specify in the question

Q3 - The number of referrals received from Stoke and North Staffordshire CCG's per month from Feb 2019 to March 2020? – Again is this for Cataract Surgery as it doesn't specify in the question,

Q4 - What is the Current waiting time for cataract surgery as of June 2020? - We do not report waiting lists at procedure/treatment level, just by specialty level – do you want information at this level? If so, it would be the longest wait or the average wait?

On the same day you responded via email with the following:

“Q1 - What was the number of Cataract surgeries undertaken per month from Feb 2019 to March 2020? – is this all types of Cataract Surgery or a specific type of surgery? All types but can you identify / split complex from Non-complex in the numbers please

Q2 - What was the Waiting Time from referral to treatment per month from Feb 2019 to March 2020? – Is this for Cataract Surgery as it doesn't specify in the question – Yes it is

Q3 - The number of referrals received from Stoke and North Staffordshire CCG's per month from Feb 2019 to March 2020? – Again is this for Cataract Surgery as it doesn't specify in the question, - Yes it is

Q4 - What is the Current waiting time for cataract surgery as of June 2020? - We do not report waiting lists at procedure/treatment level, just by specialty level – do you want information at this level? If so, it would be the longest wait or the average wait? Yes please for ophthalmology and as an average but also identifying the number of patients that have waited over 52 weeks”

On the same day we contacted you via email as question 2 required further clarifications, we asked: Is this the average per month, the longest or the shortest?

You replied via email with the following:

“No it's fine, glad you are asking for clarification.

All 3 if possible please; average per month, and the longest and the shortest”

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 making an FOI Request in regards to Cataract Surgery performed at UHNM, as follows:

University Hospitals of North Midlands: (as clarified above)

1. What was the number of Cataract surgeries undertaken per month from Feb 2019 to March 2020?

A1 Please see below: note that we do not categorise procedures by complex/non-complex.

Month	Procedures Undertaken
Feb-19	237
Mar-19	264
Apr-19	226
May-19	268
Jun-19	204
Jul-19	218
Aug-19	228
Sep-19	214
Oct-19	268
Nov-19	278
Dec-19	198
Jan-20	240
Feb-20	178

Mar-20	137
Grand Total	3158

Q2 What was the Waiting Time from referral to treatment per month from Feb 2019 to March 2020?

A2 Information not held: RTT information is a picture (snapshot) at a particular point in time, and therefore we do not hold a “monthly” RTT waiting time. Each patient’s RTT time will be different.

The Trust takes a snapshot of the patients who were treated the end of the month; we are only required to report RTT down to specialty level.

Q3. The number of referrals received from Stoke and North Staffordshire CCG’s per month from Feb 2019 to March 2020?

A3 Referrals into the Trust are not for a specific procedures, they are for a particular specialty, It is only following the outpatient appointment a decision will be made as to whether to undertake surgery, therefore we are unable advise how many referrals have been received for cataract surgery.

Q4 What is the Current waiting time for cataract surgery as of June 2020?

A4 We have reviewed the ophthalmology waiting list and what each patient is intended to have, as we don’t report waiting lists at procedure level, we have identified there are currently 426 patients on the ophthalmology waiting list as at 16th July. These patients have an intended procedure associated with cataract surgery (please note the procedure can change once the patient is in surgery).

The average waiting time of the above 426 patients is currently 21 weeks with less than 5* patients currently waiting 52+weeks.

* 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 Data Protection Act 2018. Accordingly, this aspect of your request is exempt from disclosure under the terms of Section 40(2) of the FOI Act. *Personal information*. However as the Trust is committed to openness and transparency we can band the numbers and have provided that above.

This exemption is an absolute exemption and therefore no consideration of the public interest test is needed.

Q5 Current numbers on waiting list for cataract surgery as of June 2020?

A5 We have reviewed the ophthalmology waiting list and what each patient is intended to have, as we don’t report waiting lists at procedure level. We have identified there are currently 426 patients on the ophthalmology waiting list as at 16th July. These patients have an intended procedure associated with cataract surgery (please note the procedure can change once the patient is in surgery).

*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.

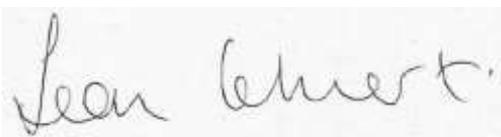
Should you have a complaint about the response or the handling of your request, please also contact my office to request a review of this. If having exhausted the Trust's FOIA complaints process you are still not satisfied, you are entitled to approach the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and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