



Ref: FOIA Reference 2020/21-468b

Date: 3rd March 2021

Email foi@uhn.nhs.uk

Dear

I am writing in response to your email dated 24th February 2021 sent to PALs requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding our response on deaths at RSUH

You emailed the following:

"Thank you for your response. There has been some confusion with the request the header asked for covid 19 related deaths. Can this figure be sent to me please? Using the same date range"

On the same day we contacted you via email as we required the following clarification.

Our apologies for the confusion on your request, however before we can answer please can you clarify what you mean by *"Covid 19 related deaths. Can this figure be sent to me please"*

Are you asking for deaths with Covid-19 or from Covid-19?

You replied with the following:

"Deaths which covid is the cause of death (from)"

A copy of our original request is below with the amended answers.

On 22nd January 2021 we contacted you via email as we required a time frame in order to collate the information

On the 21st January you replied via email with the following:
"From January 2020 to January 2021"

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 writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
I would like to know the figure of deaths recorded at the Royal Stoke University Hospital**

A1 Please note these figures are for Royal Stoke University Hospital site only as per the question and relate to "all hospital deaths":-

January 2020 to December 2020 inclusive = 3011

1st January to 21st January inclusive = 280. (Note that the month of January 2021 is still current).

Amended question

Q1 There has been some confusion with the request the header asked for covid 19 related deaths. Can this figure be sent to me please?

A1 Section 12 exemption as detailed below,

I can neither confirm nor deny whether the information you have requested is held by the Trust in its entirety. This is because the information requested in your question is not held centrally, but may be recorded in individual health/death records. In order to confirm whether this information is held we would therefore have to individually access all individual health/death 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 individual health/death 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*

Note:

1. *As part of our due diligence in determining whether the Section 12 exemption was appropriate, we took one patient at random and identified multiple contributing factors as to why the patient passed away (in the example we reviewed there were 8). It would require a clinician to review the paper medical record, (which in the majority of cases have been archived to off-site storage), and such a review may not be able to definitively determine a single cause of death. Taking this example as a base line (the length of time to identify the record and review - approx. 2 minutes) and multiplying that by the 1051 patients concerned (as at 19 January 2021) would take 35 hours, which is far in excess of the 18 hours listed in the FOI legislation as a reasonable amount of time for one person to collate the data.*

*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.

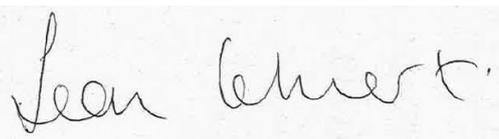
Should you have a complaint about the response or the handling of your request, please also contact my office to request a review of this. If having exhausted the Trust's FOIA complaints process you are still not satisfied, you are entitled to approach the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and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