



Ref: FOIA Reference 2021/22-418

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

Date: 20th December 2021

Email foi@uhnm.nhs.uk

Dear

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your email dated 19th November 2021 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding long Covid.

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 Under the Freedom of Information Act, I would like to request the following information on the number of staff impacted by long Covid under your Trust.

How many staff members were recorded to have had long Covid while working for your Trust at any time in the period between March 2020 - September 2021?

A1 Long-covid is not a classification in the NHS Staff Absence Dataset in order to supply this all staff records would require checking- 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 this question 4 is not held centrally, but may be recorded in staff records. In order to confirm whether this information is held we would therefore have to individually access all staff 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 staff 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*

Under section 16 of the FOI Act we are required to provide requestors with advice and assistance where possible. We would therefore like to advise you that if your request is shortened to just questions 4 and 5 we are able to comply within the 18 hour time frame. In order to avoid delay to your response we have provided this below.

Q2 What were the five longest periods in days that a member of staff took a leave of absence due to long Covid in the time period between March 2020 - September 2021?

A2 In order to supply this all staff records would require checking- section 12 exemption as detailed below:

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Q3 Could you state all leave of absences taken where long Covid was cited as the cause between March 2020 and September 2021.

A3 In order to supply this all staff records would require checking- 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 this question 4 is not held centrally, but may be recorded in staff records. In order to confirm whether this information is held we would therefore have to individually access all staff 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 staff 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*

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Q4 Does your Trust offer any specialised support for staff members living with long Covid? If so could you please provide details of these services?

A4 The Trust provided 5 cohorts of a long covid rehabilitation programme and is considering providing further programmes.

The Trust has a Wellbeing Plan in place and offers a full range of support services to our staff, including signposting to national support services available and support offered by external organisations. Our wellbeing offerings include Listening, Emotional and Crisis support. The Trust has well established Staff Counselling and Support, Occupational Health and Physiotherapy Services available to our staff as well a Staff Psychological and Wellbeing hub

Q5 What plans, if any, are in place to improve the support available to staff members who are living with long Covid while working for your Trust?

A5 The Trust is considering providing further long-covid rehabilitation programmes. The Trust reviews its Wellbeing Plans regularly. The plan was last reviewed and updated in October 2021

*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.

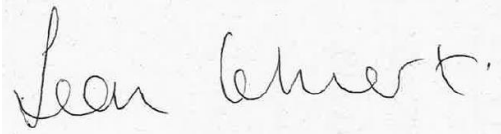
Should you have a complaint about the response or the handling of your request, please also contact my office to request a review of this. If having exhausted the Trust's FOIA complaints process you are still not satisfied, you are entitled to approach the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and 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 671612.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light grey background. The signature reads "Jean Lehnert" in a cursive script.

Jean Lehnert
Data, Security & Protection Manager