

Ref: FOIA Reference 2020/21-516

Date: 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Email [foi@uhnm.nhs.uk](mailto:foi@uhnm.nhs.uk)

Dear

I am writing in response to your email dated 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding still births.

On 11<sup>th</sup> February 2021 we contacted you via email as we required clarification your specific definition as to physical injuries for neonates and maternal.

You replied via email with:

- *By physical injuries for mothers, I meant injury to include perineal tears.*
- *In neonates, I meant injury to include broken bones and shoulder dystocia*".

We responded via email with:

Unfortunately that doesn't answer our request for clarification;

Please can you clarify further?

*What do you mean by perineal tears as they are a known complication of childbirth, are you specifically referring to 3rd/4th degree tears?*

*Also shoulder dystocia with injury as most dystocia's have none, therefore please be more specific as to what you mean by "injury"*

You replied via email with:

*"Of course, I can clarify further. Yes, I refer to 3rd/4th degree tears  
And with baby injuries, you can just include broken bones/limbs during birth"*

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 questions 2 and 3 is not held centrally, but may be recorded in individual health records. In order to confirm whether this information is held we would therefore have to individually access all health 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 health 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 the questions that we are able to comply within the 18 hour time frame. In order to avoid delay to your response we have provided this below.

As of 1<sup>st</sup> 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 Please can I have the following information?**

**1a) How many STILLBIRTHS and NEONATAL DEATHS (death aged 0-28 days) have been recorded by your trust in EACH of the last 5 years (including, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020, please can I have the information split by year)?**

**b) How many of these deaths were formally investigated as a *serious incident*?**

**c) How many of these deaths have been found to be *potentially avoidable* by *either* internal or external investigations, including inquests?**

A1 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 as being <5

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

QUESTION 1 – 3

Numbers and Serious Incidents (SIs); potentially avoidable unless otherwise stated  
Stillbirth (SBs)

- 2016 =19
- 2017 =28
- 2018 =31
- 2019 =20
- 2020 =22

SB ≥37 weeks SIs

- 2016 = No SIs
- 2017 = <5 SI not related to causation of stillbirth
- 2018 = <5 with <5 case(s) not related to causation of stillbirth
- 2019 = 0
- 2020 = <5

SB <37 weeks SIs

- 2016 = <5
- 2017 = 0
- 2018 = <5
- 2019 = <5

- 2020 = <5

Neonatal deaths (NND)

- 2016 = 16
- 2017 = 13
- 2018 = 15
- 2019 = 10
- 2020 = 16

NND ≥ 37 weeks SIs

- 2016 = 0
- 2017 = <5
- 2018 = 0
- 2019 = 0
- 2020 = <5 (waiting on post-mortem)

**Q2 2a) How many cases of BRAIN INJURIES or other PHYSICAL INJURIES to babies during or after birth, have been recorded by your Trust, in each of the last 5 years: (including, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020, please can I have the information split by year where possible)?**

**b) How many of these were investigated as serious incidents?**

**c) How many of these have been found to be *potentially avoidable* by either internal or external investigations?**

A2 Section 12 exemption as detailed above, however see answer 1 for partial answer (section 16)

**Q3 3a) How many MATERNAL DEATHS and MATERNAL INJURIES during or after birth, have been recorded by your trust, in each year over the last 5 years? (including, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020, please can I have the information split by year where possible)?**

**b) How many of these were investigated as serious incidents?**

**c) How many of these might have been possibly avoidable?**

A3 Section 12 exemption as detailed above, however see below for partial answer (section 16)

Question 3: Maternal deaths (and See answer 1)

Number and how many of these were investigated as serious incidents and how many of these might have been possibly avoidable?

2020 = <5 (<5 serious incident reported but no breaches of care that would have contributed to the outcome (aortic dissection); <5 epilepsy and <5 meningitis not avoidable)

2019 = <5 (No SIs – <5 delivered at another organisation passed away in another speciality at UHNM and <5 suicide)

2018 = <5 (No SIs – <5 Cancer related and <5 suicide)

2017 = <5 (No SIs drug related overdose)

2016 = 0

\*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](http://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,



University Hospitals  
of North Midlands  
NHS Trust

Jean Lehnert  
Data, Security & Protection Manager

