



**University Hospitals
of North Midlands**
NHS Trust

**Royal Stoke University Hospital
Data, Security and Protection**

Newcastle Road
Stoke-on-Trent
Staffordshire
ST4 6QG

Ref: FOIA Reference 2020/21-509

Date: 5th March 2021

Email foi@uhn.nhs.uk

Dear

I am writing in response to your email dated 6th February 2021 (received into our office 8th February) requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding Paediatric Orthopaedic hospital admissions..

On 8th February 2021 we contacted you as under section 8(1) of the FOI Act, requestors are required to provide a full name in order to make a request valid. The Information Commissioner states that a "title and/or first name with surname satisfies the requirement for provision of a real name, as does the use by a female applicant of her maiden name". Therefore, in order to proceed with your request can you please supply us with a valid name?

On 13th February 2021 (received into our office 15th February) you replied via email with you name.

On 23rd February 2021 we contacted you via email as we required the following clarification:
Q1 (3) advise what types of surgery you are interested (OPECS codes required) as there are hundreds of codes which could be classed as paediatric orthopaedic operations.
Q2 (3) as above

On the same day you replied via email with:

"If I have understood it correctly you meant to say OPCS codes rather than OPCES codes. Irrespective of the codes, my query was more generic without pertaining to any specific type of procedure"

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 questions 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 what 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 1st November 2014 University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust (UJNM) 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 supply the following:

- 1) Paediatric Orthopaedic hospital admissions in numbers in the last year**
- 2) Paediatric Orthopaedic outpatient attendances in last year**
- 3) Number of Paediatric orthopaedic operations done in last year**

A1 1) Paediatric Orthopaedic hospital admissions in numbers in the last year – we do not record the reason why a person was admitted to hospital, however there is treatment function code called 214 (Paeds Trauma & Orthopaedics) which we have used to ascertain admission numbers, please note this is not solely Paeds orthopaedic admissions, it will include trauma admissions too – so looking at the inpatient admissions where the admitting treatment function code is 214 – Paeds Trauma & Orthopaedics = there were **323 admissions**
2) Paediatric Orthopaedic outpatient attendances in last year = Again looking at the treatment function code 214 (Paeds Trauma & Orthopaedics) there were **7136 attendances**
3) Number of Paediatric orthopaedic operations done in last year – We have requested clarification from yourself as to what you mean by “Paediatric orthopaedic operations” and we also asked for the relevant OPCS coding as to what makes up this cohort of operation however you responded back with “*The number of paediatric orthopaedic operations should comprise of all orthopaedic surgeries (emergency and planned surgeries) performed on patients under the age of 18 years without limiting to any type of surgery*” – the NHS does not classify operations into generic groups.

Therefore we looked at the patients who were admitted under the Treatment function code of 214 – (Paeds Trauma & Orthopaedics) and looked at where they had OPCS coding applied to their inpatient spell, however when looking at this information further there are procedures/treatments/investigations which you would not associate with being solely orthopaedic operations, for example catheter removal, plastic cast removal, imaging investigations. These procedures/operations are not thought of as being orthopaedic operations we would have to review each patients record to ascertain if an appropriate operation had been undertaken **therefore this is exempt under Section 12 as detailed above.**

The information that we can supply that includes non-orthopaedic operations, (as we are unable to distinguish without manually reviewing every record then the total number of operations undertaken), including the operations stated previously under the treatment function code 214 **is 316.**

Q2 Please supply the following:

- 1) Spinal surgery hospital admissions in numbers in the last year**
- 2) Spinal surgery outpatient attendances in last year**
- 3) Number of spinal surgery operations done in last year**

A2 1) Spinal surgery hospital admissions in numbers in the last year, we do not record the reason why a person was admitted to hospital, however there is treatment function code called 108 = SPINAL SURGERY SERVICE which we have used to ascertain admission numbers therefore looking at the inpatient admissions where the admitting treatment function code is 108 = SPINAL SURGERY SERVICE, there were 794 admissions

- 2) Spinal surgery outpatient attendances in last year – we looked at the treatment function code 108 = SPINAL SURGERY SERVICE, there were 5051 attendances
- 3) Number of Spinal surgery operations done in last year – We requested clarification from the yourself as to what you meant by Spinal surgery operations and we also asked for the relevant OPCS coding as to what makes up this cohort of operation however you responded back with “Yet again the data requested is on all spinal surgeries (emergency and planned) without limiting to any specific type of surgery (or specific codes).” – The NHS does not classify operations into generic groups.

Therefore we looked at the patients who were admitted under the Treatment function code of 108 = SPINAL SURGERY SERVICE and looked at where they had OPCS coding applied to their inpatient spell, however when looking at this information further there are procedures/treatments/investigations which you would not associate with been solely spinal surgery operations, for example catheter removal, plastic cast removal, imaging investigations. These procedures/operations are not thought of as been spinal surgery operations we would have to review each patients record to ascertain if an appropriate operation had been undertaken therefore this is exempt under **Section 12 as detailed above.**

The information that we can supply includes non-spinal surgery operations as we are unable to distinguish without manually reviewing every record then the total number of operations undertaken (including the operations stated previously) under the treatment function code 108 is 643

*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.

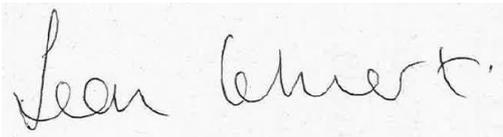
Should you have a complaint about the response or the handling of your request, please also contact my office to request a review of this. If having exhausted the Trust's FOIA complaints process you are still not satisfied, you are entitled to approach the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and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