



University Hospitals  
of North Midlands  
NHS Trust

Ref: FOIA Reference 2021/22-021

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

Date: 27<sup>th</sup> April 2021

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

Dear

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your email dated 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding actual deaths,

***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***

Please note the FOI Act sets out a twenty working day timescale for requests to be completed by.

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 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*

On 14<sup>th</sup> April 2021 we contacted you via email as we required the following clarification:



You stated: ***Please respond to this request within 14 days.*** Please note that the FOI allows **20 working days** to complete, however until you have clarified the below the “clock” will be stopped and will only resume when we are able to clarify your request.

To continue with your request we require clarification on the specific following:

1. Are you asking how many deaths at UHNM?
2. Q3, are you asking how many patients committed suicide in the Trust whilst patients?
3. Are you asking “out of the deaths that occurred **whilst an inpatient** how many were from FLU, Heart disease or suicide”

On 14<sup>th</sup> April 2021 (received into our office 15<sup>th</sup> April) you replied via email with:

*‘Q 1 . I'd like to know who many patients and out-patients died from influenza within the hospital of the UHNM Trust between 31st March 2018 to 31st March 2019 compared to deaths between 31st March 2019 to 31st March 2020.*

*Q2 Also how many died of heart disease, from between the same dates as Q1.*

*Q3 How many deceased patients received by the hospital within the UHNM Trust and North Staffordshire were determined as suicide as from between same dates as Q1.’*

And later- again via email:

*‘I'd like to point out that all the deaths I'm asking about will not be Covid deaths .!’*

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 I am firstly trying to gather information regarding actual deaths, not from Covid but from influenza from the 31st March 2018 to 31st March 2019 compared to 31st March 2019 - 31st March 2020. .**

A1 For patients confirmed influenza positive in the period March 31<sup>st</sup> 2018 thru' March 31<sup>st</sup> 2019 there were 47 patients who RIP'd in hospital within 28 days of their positive influenza test compared to 37 patients who had tested positive for influenza between March 31<sup>st</sup> 2019 and March 31<sup>st</sup> 2020.

**Q2 Secondly, I'd like to ask how many deaths from heart disease from 31st March 2018 - 31st March 2019 compared to deaths between 31st March 2019 - 31st March 2020.**

A2 Section 12 exemption as detailed above

**Q3 Thirdly the amount of deaths by suicide from 31st March 2018 to 31st March 2019 compared to deaths between 31st March 2019 and 31st March 2020.**

**Please respond to this request within 14 days.**

A3 As Answer 2, however, where there is reason to believe the death is from suicide the body will be taken directly to the mortuary/coroner and would not be brought to the Trust as post-mortem has to be undertaken to establish cause of death.

The following website may assist you -

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths>

\*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.

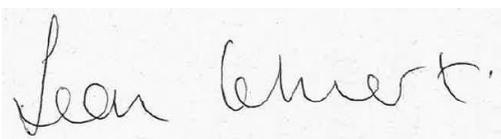
Should you have a complaint about the response or the handling of your request, please also contact my office to request a review of this. If having exhausted the Trust's FOIA complaints process you are still not satisfied, you are entitled to approach the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and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

