



Ref: FOIA Reference 2021/22-235

Date: 16th August 2021

Email foi@uhnm.nhs.uk

Dear

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your email dated 23rd July 2021 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding dog bites.

On 27th July 2021 we contacted you via email as we required clarification on what you meant by 'stuck by a dog'

On the same day you replied via email with:
'Please note this should read "struck" rather than stuck.'

I can neither confirm nor deny whether the information you have requested is held by the Trust in its entirety. This is because some of 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 questions 1 and 3 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 (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 make an open government request for all the information to which I am entitled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

1. For 2021; by the Hospitals in your Trust please can I receive a monthly breakdown on the number of people visiting hospitals having been "Bitten or stuck by a dog"

I understand that request 1 asks for information relating to 2021. Please provide me with the most recent figures in your Trust’s database.

A1 We sought clarification as to what you meant by “stuck by a dog” – this should have read “Struck by a dog”.

With regards to the questions we have taken “visiting” as meaning attending the AE department.

There is no way to identify people who are “struck” therefore we are unable to give information relating to this part of the question.

In relation to the dog bite part of the question we only record that a person has been bitten, we do not record how the bite was sustained, however in the triage notes staff sometimes write how the bite was sustained, therefore we have looked for the word “dog” please note if this has been misspelt or the word dog does not appear in the triage notes then these patients will not be included.

The only alternative way would be to manually review every patient who has been bitten and ascertain to see how the bite was sustained as it might be held in patients notes = section 12 exemption as detailed above.

For the information we can identify using the above criteria here is the information for all questions: - We are unable to provide some of 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.

Month	2019	2020	2021
January	35	32	17
February	42	40	29
March	36	26	27
April	33	<5	36
May	43	12	42
June	37	31	35
July	45	31	
August	59	51	
September	36	34	
October	38	27	
November	38	44	
December	31	29	

Q2 For 2020; by the Hospitals in your Trust please can I receive a monthly breakdown on the number of people visiting hospitals having been “Bitten or stuck by a dog”

A2 As answer 1

Q3 For 2019; by the Hospitals in your Trust please can I receive a monthly breakdown on the number of people visiting hospitals having been “Bitten or stuck by a dog”

A3 As answer 1

*Please note that any individuals identified do not give consent for their personal data to be processed for the purposes of direct marketing.

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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.

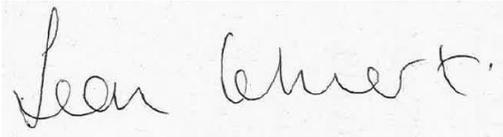
Should you have a complaint about the response or the handling of your request, please also contact my office to request a review of this. If having exhausted the Trust’s FOIA complaints process you are still not satisfied, you are entitled to approach the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) and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

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature reads "Jean Lehnert" in a cursive, slightly slanted script.

Jean Lehnert
Data, Security & Protection Manager