



Ref: FOIA Reference 2021/22-300

Date: 16<sup>th</sup> November 2021

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

Dear

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your email dated 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2021 (received into our office 3<sup>rd</sup> September) requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding Neonatal care unit access complaints, Covid-19.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2021 we contacted you via email as you have used two entirely different names

The FOI Act clearly states that if we suspect that the request has come from a Pseudonym we are entitled to request proof of the person's identity, as provision of a Pseudonym invalidates a request, therefore please can you provide a photo copy of your driver's licence or other official document that validates your identity.

On 11<sup>th</sup> October 2021 you replied via email using [REDACTED] email but supplied [REDACTED] proof of identity

As of 1<sup>st</sup> November 2014 University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust (UHM) 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 Could you please tell me, between March 1st 2020 and the date of this email (02/09/2021)?**

**1) How many comments through the patient advice and liaison system (PALS)\*, as well as official complaints, has your Trust received from patients complaining about limited access to neonatal care units as a result of COVID-19 restrictions?**

**Please do this by searching for complaints containing any of the words "neonatal", "Covid", "covid-19", "coronavirus", "incubator", and "baby".**

A1 There was one (1) complaint received for NICU during this period regarding visiting and Covid

**Q2 Can you select the five most recent complaints and provide me with the following details:**

**a) A summary of the complaint (e.g., a couple whose baby spent two weeks in an incubator following premature birth complained about not being allowed to enter the neonatal care unit together and for only a limited number of hours per day)**

- b) The exact wording of the complaint, with redactions to remove potentially identifying information**  
**c) What action the Trust took in response**

A2 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 number 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 confirm the theme of the complaint was as per your question.

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

\*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.

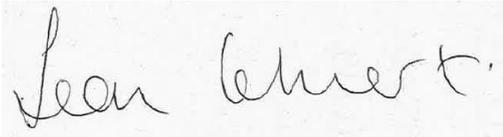
Should you have a complaint about the response or the handling of your request, please also contact my office to request a review of this. If having exhausted the Trust's FOIA complaints process you are still not satisfied, you are entitled to approach the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and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

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

Jean Lehnert  
**Data, Security & Protection Manager**