



**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 2021/22-648

Date: 4th April 2022

Email foi@uhnm.nhs.uk

Dear

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your email dated 17th March 2022 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding periods.

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.

As of 1st 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 This is a FOI from Nursing Standard magazine about whether you have a policy in place to support staff on their period:

The questions are:

Do you have a period policy for staff?

A1 The Trust does not have a specific policy.

The Trust has:



- An Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (Encompassing Employment and Service Provision) Policy – Which requires provision of reasonable adjustments to support employees with a disability
- A Sickness Absence Management Policy - In managing sickness absence, the Trust takes into account the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 and all subsequent amendments. The Policy provides for the individual to be properly supported in their return to work, which may include a phased return and or temporary arrangements being put in place. Each instance is dealt with on a case by case basis and agreed by the Line Manager and the employee, and with guidance from Occupational Health, so a return to work is supportive.

Q2 If you do, when was it implemented and what does it say?

A2 Not applicable

Q3 If not, are you planning to implement one?

A3 No

Q4 Do you provide any free sanitary products for staff? If yes, for which staff and where?

A4 No. However, The Trust does provide a 'Good Causes - Staff Benefits' fund, where staff are welcome to apply for non-commercial items/projects that will help improve the health, wellbeing and motivation of our staff

Q5 Are the needs of women who have health problems related to their periods (such as endometriosis) covered by any other policies?

A5 Not specifically.

Following a period of long term sickness absence (28 days +), the individual is properly supported in their return to work, which may include a phased return. Temporary arrangements could include:

- Allowing an employee time off to attend medical appointments
- Modifying a job description to take away tasks that cause particular difficulty
- Offering flexibility in working hours/patterns
- Modifying work patterns or changing workplace
- Acquiring or modifying equipment and tools
- Modifying workstations, furniture, movement patterns
- Reallocating work within the team or providing alternative work
- Access to Occupational Health and counselling services

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list.

Temporary arrangements are dealt with on a case by case basis and are discussed and mutually agreed (wherever possible) between the Line Manager and the employee, and with guidance from Occupational Health, so that the programme of return is supportive and the appropriate medical rationale and benefits of such are understood

UHNM as both an employer and service provider has a duty to comply with the Equality Act 2010, and provide reasonable adjustments to support employees with a disability. A long term condition impacting on day to day activity would be supported with reasonable adjustments, tailored adjustments plan and disability leave as appropriate.

Q6 What are you doing to ensure staff have the knowledge and support they need with any issues related to their menstrual cycle?

A6 See below:

- We ensure that all staff have access to local, high quality and accredited occupational health and related services
- We have a dedicated staff network for employees with disabilities or long term conditions.
- We provide advice to managers supporting staff with long term conditions and access to a toolkits and other resources
- We offer a combination of face to face and virtual health and wellbeing events on a variety of topics and promote a range of wellbeing activities and offers via dedicated wellbeing communications across the organisation
- We have a Wellbeing Plan in place, which is reviewed and updated periodically
- We have Health and Wellbeing Ambassadors who have a practical role in ensuring the safety, physical, mental and emotional health and wellbeing of our colleagues
- We ensure that health and wellbeing is a topic on performance reviews, Divisional Boards and Executive and Board Committees.
- We have introduced wellbeing conversations requiring managers and those with similar caring responsibilities for NHS people to actively engage in an on-going dialogue with their employees to support their wellbeing

*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

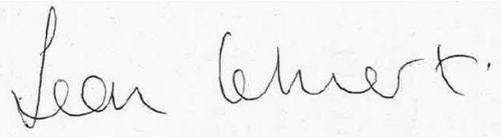
still not satisfied, you are entitled to approach the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and request an assessment of the manner in which the Trust has managed your request.

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,



Jean Lehnert
Data, Security & Protection Manager