



Ref: FOIA Reference 2022/23-157

Date: 19<sup>th</sup> July 2022

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

Dear

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your email dated 22nd June 2022 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding equipment.

**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.**

On 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2022 we contacted you via email as we required a date in order to collate the information

On the same day you replied via email with:

*'I'm looking for the last 5 years.'*

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 would like to make a FOI information request regarding hospital equipment.**

**I would like to know (segmented by hospital):**

**1. The process which the hospital follows for end-of-life equipment**

A1 Capital Replacement.

The Medical Device Strategy Committee works in collaboration with Clinical Technology, Divisions and Supplies and Procurement. In particular Clinical Technology's team of specialist engineers work with division utilising their in-depth knowledge of Medical Devices, collaboratively to identify devices that present a risk due to the lack of service support. These assessments are completed in conjunction with divisional priorities which reflected technological advances which provide improved patient outcomes.

Capital Investment group informs the subgroup of the capital allocation and the sub group works with bid leads and Supplies and Procurement to procure the equipment.

Cross divisional priorities are presented at Medical Device Strategy Committee bid prioritisation meetings which are scheduled to fit in with the business planning cycle.

Stated risks regarding clinical urgency, equipment condition and reliability, etc. are challenged by the Medical Device Strategy Committee chair or Clinical Technology as appropriate. At a subsequent meeting consisting of the stakeholders from Medical Device Strategy Committee, a prioritised approved bid list is generated for submission to the Capital Investment group for consideration against available capital.

Bids that are approved but whose priority leaves them still unfunded when the capital allocation has been assigned are contained on a reserve list

All disposals must have a completed and fully approved CP1 (Capital disposal form) before it can be removed from site.

Either proceeds are received from the auctioneers via a self-billing invoice or an invoice will be raised to the customer.

#### Revenue Replacement

This equipment currently is replaced via a strategy of *replace on failure* rather than the planned replacement programme.

### **Q2 The process by which the hospital decides that an equipment has reached its end of life**

A2 See below:

1. Clinical Technology receives notification from the supplier informing UHNM that a specific device is obsolete (service support withdrawn): or
2. clinicians advise that technological advances have rendered the device no longer fit for purpose; or
3. a device is no longer economical to repair (repair is >60% of purchase price)

### **Q3 Which companies the hospital works with in order to dispose of / sell off / repurpose... medical equipment**

A3 See below:

- British Medical Auctions
- Intuitive
- Radiology Oncology Systems
- The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust
- Advanced instruments LTD
- Severn X-ray supplies
- Probo medical
- Intuitive Surgical Ltd

**Q4 The past data which the hospital has on where equipment has gone**

A4 The Trust does not collate data on where equipment has gone, although at a summary level equipment would be disposed via one of the following routes:

- Written off due to being broken etc.
- British Medical Auctions
- Intuitive
- Radiology Oncology Systems
- THE ROYAL WOLVERHAMPTON NHS TRUST
- Advanced instruments LTD
- Severn X-ray supplies
- Probo medical
- Intuitive Surgical Ltd
- PFI equipment is handed back to the provider at the end of the contract for subsequent disposal

**Q5 The data on which medical equipment that the hospital has which is about to reach its end of life**

A5 5.a Medical devices contained on Clinical Technology asset database >7 years old

Please note that these lives are in line with the Trust's asset policy and standard lives have been applied, which in the case of medical devices is 7 to 10 years. Although we have provided information on assets that are more than 7 years old we have not adjusted for any equipment that will be in use beyond their policy life and assets may be kept in use for longer than the standard life that we have applied. **See attached spread sheet = 4 tabs**

5.b Plant and Machinery contained on the Fixed Asset Register not linked to Clinical Technology assets, that have an expiration date prior to 31/3/23. See attached spread sheet

As above the expiration dates of the plant and machinery assets are based on a standard life that has been applied as per the Trust's policy. The assets may be kept in use beyond the expiration date.

**Q6 The data on which medical equipment the hospital currently has, when it was sourced and where it was sourced from, at what price**

The definition of medical equipment would include:

- 1: Storage and Transport Medical Equipment
- 2: Durable Medical Equipment (e.g. hospital beds)
- 3: Diagnostic Medical Equipment (imaging machines e.g. Xray, CT scanners, Ultrasound)
- 4: Electronic Medical Equipment (e.g. patient monitors)
- 5: Surgical Medical Equipment (e.g. surgical tables)

**The definition would not include:**

- 6: Single use Acute Care (trays, wound kits, blood bottles, syringes)**
- 7: Procedural Medical Equipment (e.g. surgical clamps, scalpels, gloves, forceps)**
- 8: Other disposable, single use equipment**

**A general guide if the item is not covered by the above list would be that if the item has a high RRP price (e.g. unit price greater than 500 GBP) and is not single use/disposable then it should be considered medical equipment for the purposes of this request.**

**If the item is sold/repurposed/re-used to another company then it should be included.**

A6 Section 12 exemption as detailed below;

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 this question is not held centrally, but may be recorded in individual asset records. In order to confirm whether this information is held we would therefore have to individually access all individual asset 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 individual asset 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*

Rationale below:

- Unfortunately we are unable to provide the details on where the assets were sourced or the purchase price, within the 18 hour limit. In order to collate this information for all of the 6,500 medical devices it would take one full time member of staff more than 75 hours, so well in excess of the 18 hours FOI cap. In addition to this the oldest piece of equipment dates back to 1987, and in line with Trust policy we retain records for 7 years only, so we don't hold the information for all medical equipment.

We have provided a breakdown of all live assets with a value >£500 contained on the Clinical Technology database.

Plant and Machinery assets taken from the asset register within their useful life (according to policy). These are not linked to Clinical Technology so are separate to the above breakdown. Per Trust policy, assets will be individually over £5,000 in value or over £250 each and collectively more than £5,000 if they are functionally interdependent

\*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.

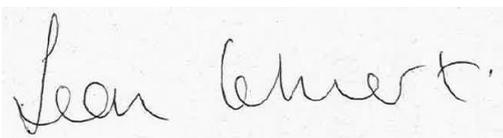
Should you have a complaint about the response or the handling of your request, please also contact my office to request a review of this. If having exhausted the Trust's FOIA complaints process you are still not satisfied, you are entitled to approach the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and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



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