

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST 494-2324

10th November 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

In line with the Freedom of Information Act (2000) we would like to understand the use of Full Blood Count tests (FBC; also called Complete Blood Count, CBC) for chemotherapy cancer treatment given by your hospitals. This can cover tests prescribed to be done in-hospital or at a point-of-care unit (pharmacy, GP) in the last year January 2022-January 2023.

We would be grateful if you could respond to the following questions:

1. What percentage of FBC tests alone (without a biochemistry test such as kidney function) are prescribed for chemotherapy patients per month?
2. For the services in your hospital, are FBC tests prescribed to be done at the hospital, in a GP unit or at the pharmacy or in some other primary care setting?
3. What is the expected time for FBC tests scheduled before chemotherapy - 72h before chemotherapy day, 48h, 24h, or on the day of chemotherapy?
4. In the last year January 2022-January 2023 how many cancer treatment appointments for chemotherapy were cancelled due to the patient having neutropenia and/or thrombocytopenia on the same day as chemotherapy scheduled appointment?
5. What are chemotherapies that only require an FBC test to decide if chemotherapy can be administered (without other biochemistry tests such as kidney function)?

Question	Answer			
1. Percentage of FBC tests alone prescribed for cancer chemotherapy patients	None Biochemistry such as U&Es and LFTs are included in standard tests prior to chemotherapy			
2. Location of blood sample collection for FBC test (tick all that apply)	In hospital	GP	Pharmacy	Other primary care setting
	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
3. Expected time for FBC tests scheduled before chemotherapy	72h Yes for 3 weekly regimens	48 Yes for 2 weekly regimen	24h Yes for weekly regimens	Tests on chemotherapy day Yes, on exception
4. Cancer appointments cancelled based on results from an FBC alone (neutropenia and/or thrombocytopenia) on the same day as chemotherapy scheduled appointment	This data is not recorded. Blood results, prescribing and appointments can be on different electronic systems and information not held			
5. Chemotherapies that only require an FBC test for checking if patient is fit to receive chemotherapy	Our standard practice is to include biochemistry with FBC prior to treatment.			

If it is not possible to provide the information requested due to the information exceeding the cost of compliance limits identified in Section 12, please provide advice and assistance, under your Section 16 obligations, as to how I can refine my request to be included in the scope of the Act.

I look forward to your response within 20 working days, as stipulated by the Act. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me via email and I will be happy to clarify what I am asking for, my details are outlined below.

Please send your responses by email to

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