



Ref: FOIA Reference 2023/24-324

Date: 9th November 2023

Email foi@uhnm.nhs.uk

Dear

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your email dated 20th July 2023 and 22nd August requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding neurosurgery and operations.

We contacted you via email:

UHNM has received several requests that are from the same person/company, therefore we are contacting you to inform you that under section 12 of the FOI Act we were aggregating these requests on neurosurgery. and operations

Your new reference number for both is 324-2324

The section 12 exemption states:

The authority can combine related requests received within a period of 60 consecutive days from:

- The same person or
- People who appear to be acting in concert or in pursuance of a campaign.

Please note that the 'clock' starts again with the latest request received for both requests

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.

Request #1

Q1 Please confirm the procedure / process for accepting patients into the neurosurgical and / or orthopaedic spinal departments at Royal Stoke Hospital who were transferred from other hospitals in September and October 2021.

a. In what situations would a transfer be accepted?

- b. Who decided whether a patient should be transferred?
- c. Please confirm whether there was any system for categorising the condition of the patients being transferred.

A1 Most patients are referred using Referapatient to ensure we have a robust governance structure.

Q2 Please confirm how many neurosurgeons and orthopaedic spinal surgeons were available (either in the hospital or on call) to undertake emergency spinal decompression surgery at Royal Stoke Hospital on 30.09.2021 and 01.10.2021.

- a. Please confirm the start and finish times of each surgeon's shift.

A2 X1 for Neurosurgery / x1 for Orthopaedic Spinal Surgery. Usually we have different Consultants for each 12 hour period DAY/NIGHT.

Q3 Please confirm what surgeries were undertaken in the neurosurgical and orthopaedic spinal operating theatres at Royal Stoke Hospital on 30.09.2021 and 01.10.2021.

- a. Please confirm the time each procedure started and the length of each procedure.

- b. Please confirm the experience level of the surgeon performing each procedure.

A3 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 questions a and b is not held centrally, but may be recorded in health records (258 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*

Request #2

Q1 Please confirm how many surgeries were performed on 30.09.2021 at Royal Stoke Hospital and for each procedure please confirm:

- a. The start and finish time of the surgery.
- b. The location of the surgery, i.e. the operating theatre.
- c. The qualification of the surgeons operating, e.g. consultant, registrar etc, and how many surgeons were operating in each surgery.

d. The discipline of the surgery, e.g. neurosurgical, cardiothoracic, gynaecology.

e. Whether the procedure was elective or non-elective.

A1 See attached Spread sheet,
note question (c)

Qualifications for the surgeon on 30/09/21

- FRCS Ed (Tr&Orth) Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh 2013
- Bachelor of Medicine Southampton University 2003
- MRCS Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh 2007

Q2 Please confirm how many of the procedures were emergencies, if any.

A2 42 Elective, 22 Non-Elective

Q3 Please confirm how many operating theatres were open from 13:00 on 30.09.2021.

A3 21

Q4 Please confirm the time that any of the operating theatres closed, if any closed before the end of the day (23:59) on 30.09.2021.

A4 See attached Spread sheet

*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.

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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.



**University Hospitals
of North Midlands**
NHS Trust

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.

Yours,

Rachel Montinaro
Data Security and Protection Manager - Records