



Ref: FOIA Reference 2023/24-616

Date: 22nd February 2024

Email foi@uhn.nhs.uk

Dear

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your email dated 12th December 2023 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding ophthalmology income and activity

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.

On 27th November 2023 your colleague send in an almost identical request (#1)- see below.

Therefore we contacted you via email to inform you that we would be aggregating these two requests under section 12 of the FOI Act;
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.

THE REFERENCE FOR BOTH 616-2324

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 (PREVIOUSLY 557-2324)

Q1 Our current project is quantifying and examining the impact of the shift in provision of eye-care services, in particular cataract surgeries, from NHS Trusts towards independent providers.

A survey of all ICBs for a breakdown of spending and activity recorded against each HRG coded procedure has provided a consistent dataset showing patterns of delivery &

spend over the previous six years, we have looked at the growth of the independent sector, but what we would like to understand is the impact of the loss of cataract surgery income on NHS Trusts.

We have sent this request to the 90 NHS Trusts providing a significant amount of ophthalmology services to build a dataset which covers a wide breadth of sizes, scopes and operating models of different NHS Trust eye-care departments. Could you therefore please provide:

1. Income

For each of the financial years between 2017/18 and 2022/23, the annual income, including both inpatient and outpatient care, from:

- A. All ophthalmology services in total
- B. Care for Cataracts
- C. Care for Glaucoma
- D. Care for Age Related Macular Degeneration
- E. Care for Diabetic Retinopathy

A1 This information is not held at such a detailed level. The level of income received by the Trust relates to all services provided and is not split into service / HRG level.

Q2 Activity

For each of the financial years between 2017/18 and 2022/23, the annual activity, including both inpatient and outpatient care, for cataract care.

A2 See below

Setting	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
Inpatients	2514	2747	2557	614	1153	1593
Outpatients	1,642	1,824	1,186	499	470	756

Q3 Waiting times

For each of the financial years between 2017/18 and 2022/23, the average time that a patient would have to wait between referral and first appointment for the following conditions:

- A. Cataracts
- B. Glaucoma
- C. Age Related Macular Degeneration
- D. Diabetic Retinopathy

==Responding to this request==

//Format

We would strongly prefer data to be provided in an Excel compatible file-format, especially if there is a large quantity of data. Tables in PDF files cannot be reliably copied and risks errors and mis-transcriptions.

While there are risks around inadvertently sharing personal data through disclosures of spreadsheets, these can be adequately mitigated by copying data out of original

spreadsheets and to ensure any underlying data in hidden columns, tabs or pivot tables is excised from the disclosure.

//Coding

Our previous analysis of ICB activity and spend data was significantly enhanced by obtaining data broken down by HRG code, with the majority of activity falling under the HRG code BZ--- for ophthalmology procedures, or HRG Code WF--- for outpatient attendances. This level of detail lets us explore to what extent the complexity of the case-mix is changing as well as absolute numbers.

We don't want to over-complicate this request and generate further processing for the Trust so have requested yearly data for the limited number of categories of care as above: Care for Cataracts, Care for Glaucoma, Care for Age Related Macular Degeneration etc

But if in the course of compiling the answers officers are going through the process of summing the few dozen HRG codes falling under each category, we would appreciate that level of detail if it is not troublesome to provide.

//COVID & Block contracts

We understand that COVID caused significant disruption to the payment regimes NHS Trusts had access to and that block funding contracts have made analysis of income from different types of activity challenging to assess.

If the Trust is able to provide a consistent dataset across the six years that would be greatly appreciated.

A3 See below:

Average Wait Times in Weeks						
	2017/201	2018/201	2019/202	2020/202	2021/202	2022/202
	8	9	0	1	2	3
A. Cataracts	13	17	17	16	14	19
B. Glaucoma	18	19	12	21	14	11
C. Age Related Macular Degeneration	4	4	4	8	7	7
D. Diabetic Retinopathy	9	12	9	21	12	12

Request #2

Colleagues from the Centre for Health and the Public Interest (CHPI) have previously sent you and 90 other NHS Trusts a Freedom of Information request via the portal WhatDoTheyKnow. We realised in sending that information request we had failed to attach a named person to the request.

We also received feedback from some Trusts seeking clarification about the information that we were requesting.

As a result, we are re-submitting our request this time with a named person and also for information which we hope will be simpler to respond to.

We sincerely apologise for any inconvenience or confusion caused as a result of this.

Please could you provide the following information under the Freedom of Information Act

Q1. Annual total Trust income on Ophthalmology services, as defined above, for the years 2017/18 to 2022/23
---This should be broken down by HRG Code and Treatment Function Code

A1 As request #1

Q2. Annual total Trust Activity in relation to Ophthalmology services, as defined above, for the years 2017/18 to 2022/23
---This should be broken down by HRG Code and Treatment Function Code
When we ask for HRG Code and Treatment function we are referring to the HRG codes in the National Tariff Workbook which can be found here:
https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/22-23NT_AnnexA-National-tariff-workbook-Nov22-1.xlsx

By our understanding, 'Admitted patient care, elective and outpatient procedures' are covered by Healthcare Resource Group Code (HRG Codes) and the Ophthalmology Services fall under the codes beginning BZ***, in the 93 rows 121-213 of the "1 APC & OPROC" tab in the National Tariff Workbook 2022/23

Furthermore, there is additional data on first and follow-up 'outpatient attendances' falling under the Treatment Function Codes '130 Ophthalmology Service' and for completion the "216 Paediatric Ophthalmology Service" on the "2 Outpatients" tab. To note, we have asked for the same data from ICBs and have been provided this information in all cases.

A2 As request #1

Q3. Waiting times
For each of the financial years between 2017/18 and 2022/23, the average time that a patient would have to wait between referral and first appointment for the following conditions:

- A. Cataracts
- B. Glaucoma
- C. Age Related Macular Degeneration
- D. Diabetic Retinopathy

We would strongly prefer data to be provided in an Excel compatible file-format, especially if there is a large quantity of data. Tables in PDF files cannot be reliably copied and risks errors and mis-transcriptions.

A note on COVID & Block contracts

We understand that COVID led to changes to the payment regimes and the use of block contracts. We realise that during this period this may make analysis of income from different types of activity challenging to assess.

Taking into account these challenges, we would be grateful if the Trust is able to provide a consistent dataset across the six year financial years.

A3 As request #1

*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.

Yours,



Rachel Montinaro
Data Security and Protection Manager - Records