



Ref: FOIA Reference 2023/24-129

Date: 21st July 2023

Email foi@uhnm.nhs.uk

Dear

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your email dated 1st June 2023 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding still births.

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.

Q1 I am writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to request the following information.

If this information is already publicly available or you might be able to guide me to another information source, any advice would be gladly received.

Please provide data for each question for the years 2018 - 2022, broken down by calendar year (i.e. 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022).

1. Please provide the number of term stillbirths (37 weeks or more) at your Trust

A1 We are unable to provide the information you require in the requested format as to release this data could lead to the identification of the person(s) involved due to the low numbers involved, and would breach the Trusts obligations under Data Protection Act 2018. Accordingly, this aspect of your request is exempt from disclosure under the terms of Section 40(2) of the FOI Act. *Personal information*. However as the Trust is committed to openness and transparency we can band the numbers as being <5
This exemption is an absolute exemption and therefore no consideration of the public interest test is needed.

See below: Still birth where known / documented Gestation >= 37+0 weeks

| | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
|------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Sum of vol | 5 | <5 | 6 | <5 | <5 |

Q2 Please provide the review process for each stillbirth recorded, e.g.. X number of PMRTs, X number of SIIIs, X number referred to the coroner. If relevant, please include the number that led to no review.

A2 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 investigation/review records. In order to confirm whether this information is held we would therefore have to individually access all investigation/review 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 investigation/review 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

Under section 16 of the FOI Act we are required to provide requestors with advice and assistance where possible. We would therefore like to advise you that if your request is shortened to just the questions that we are able to comply within the 18 hour time frame.

Q3 In any reviews done following a stillbirth please list how many times each of the following was a contributing factor, concluded from the investigation.

- a. **Failing to monitor reduced foetal movements**
- b. **Wrongly interpreting test results during pregnancy**
- c. **Failing to act on test results which highlight a problem**
- d. **Failure to treat infections in the mother**
- e. **Poor staffing levels**
- f. **Failure to notice vital signs of distress**

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

Under section 16 of the FOI Act we are required to provide requestors with advice and assistance where possible. We would therefore like to advise you that if your request is shortened to just the questions that we are able to comply within the 18 hour time frame.

Note:

Between the stated timeframe all Stillbirths above 24 weeks gestation were reviewed with the MBRRACE(Mothers and Babies Reducing Risks through Confidential Enquiries via PMRT

(Perinatal Mortality Review Tool Process. During this period of time 16 cases were identified where contributory factors may have contributed to the outcome for the baby. We would not be able to confirm whether the situations listed as above may have contributed as this is a subjective view and would require all cases to be reopened and undergo a second and full multidisciplinary review. Also factors from the list above may have been present, however would not likely to have affected the outcome. Again this is subjective and would full require multidisciplinary review.

Q4 Please provide the number of neonatal deaths at your Trust

A4 Both stoke & County. Based on LIVE deliveries where date of death has been recorded by our Trust (Careflow) between 0-28 days.

| Values | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
|----------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Sum of Neonatal0-28 | 26 | 25 | 29 | 40 | 31 |
| Of Which Sum of EarlyNeonatal0-6 | 22 | 22 | 22 | 29 | 23 |

Q5 Please provide the review process for each neonatal death, e.g. X number of SIs, X number referred to the coroner. If relevant, please include the number that led to no review.

A5 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 investigation/review records. In order to confirm whether this information is held we would therefore have to individually access all investigation/review 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 investigation/review 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

Under section 16 of the FOI Act we are required to provide requestors with advice and assistance where possible. We would therefore like to advise you that if your request is shortened to just the questions that we are able to comply within the 18 hour time frame.

Note:

All neonatal deaths over 22 week's gestation that occur within one year of birth are reported to MBRACCE and are reviewed using the PMRT tool. All deaths occurring within this category are referred to the medical examiner and subsequently the coroner if required. We cannot confirm how many cases were reported at serious incidents The quality, safety and compliance department would be able to provide this information.

Q6 In any reviews following a neonatal death, please list how many times each of the following was a contributing factor, concluded from the investigation.

- a. **Failing to monitor reduced foetal movements**
- b. **Wrongly interpreting test results during pregnancy**
- c. **Failing to act on test results which highlight a problem**
- d. **Failure to treat infections in the mother**
- e. **Poor staffing levels**

- f. **Failure to notice vital signs of distress**
- g. **Failing in antenatal care**
- h. **Insufficient or inaccurate handovers**
- i. **Failing to recognise need for caesarean**

A6 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 investigation/review records. In order to confirm whether this information is held we would therefore have to individually access all investigation/review 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 investigation/review 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*

Under section 16 of the FOI Act we are required to provide requestors with advice and assistance where possible. We would therefore like to advise you that if your request is shortened to just the questions that we are able to comply within the 18 hour time frame.

Q7 Please provide the number of maternal deaths at your Trust

A7 We are unable to provide the information you require in the requested format as to release this data could lead to the identification of the person(s) involved due to the low numbers involved, and would breach the Trusts obligations under Data Protection Act 2018. Accordingly, this aspect of your request is exempt from disclosure under the terms of Section 40(2) of the FOI Act. *Personal information*. However as the Trust is committed to openness and transparency we can band the numbers as being <5
This exemption is an absolute exemption and therefore no consideration of the public interest test is needed.

Documented K2 delivery activity where Mother date of death recorded being recorded between 0-42days of delivery or pregnancy end date

| | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
|---------------------------------|------|------|------|
| Sum of Unique Ptn Activity Type | <5 | <5 | <5 |

Q8 Please provide the number of midwifery staffing red flags at your Trust

A8 Datix reported over the following years
 2018 = 13
 2019 = 32
 2020 = 40
 2021 = 55
 2022 = 60

Please note that a Datix can be submitted but contain more than one red flag. Therefore this does not represent all red flags

*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,



Rachel Montinaro
Data Security and Protection Manager - Records