



Ref: FOIA Reference 2021/22-070

Royal Stoke University Hospital
Data, Security and Protection
Newcastle Road
Stoke-on-Trent
Staffordshire
ST4 6QG

Date: 4th June 2021

Email foi@uhn.nhs.uk

Dear

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your email dated 04th May 2021 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding Public health funerals for Covid patients.

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

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 How many public health funerals the Trust has undertaken for patients who have died of Covid (within 28 days of the first positive test) with no known relatives or next of kin.

I'm looking for information relating to the period between March 2 2020 and March 2 2021. Can the information please be broken down by ethnicity, age and gender for each patient? If doing this exceeds the cost limit and the scope needs narrowing, could ethnicity be prioritised, followed by age, please?

A1 There has been six (6) Trust welfare funerals, who have died of Covid (within 28 days of the first positive test) with no known relatives or next of kin.

As follows:-

- White British 77 female
- White British 77 female
- White British 73 male
- White British 82 male

- White British 84 male
- White British 67 male

Q2 How many Covid deaths (within 28 days of the first positive test) have been recorded by the Trust between March 2 2020 and March 2 2021?

A2 I can confirm that the Trust holds information regarding Covid deaths, but feel this information is exempt under section 21: *information reasonably accessible by other means*. This is because the information is available via the Trust's public website at the following link: note that the Trust has answered in excess of 100 FOI Covid related requests throughout the pandemic and all can be found here: i.e. FOI 422-2021

<http://www.uhnm.nhs.uk/about-us/regulatory-information/freedom-of-information-publication-scheme/freedom-of-information-disclosure-log/>

Q3 How much a public health funeral typically costs the Trust, and if possible, how much has been spent on public health funerals by the trust between March 2 2020 and March 2 2021.

A3 A welfare funeral costs the Trust £1000, around £18,000 has been spent for this period

Q4 The relationship between the Trust and the local authority/authorities when it comes to public health funerals and the processes involved in deciding who is responsible for arranging them.

A4 See below:

- If the deceased dies in hospital with next of kin/ no funds the Trust are responsible.
- If the deceased dies in the community the local authority are responsible.
- If the deceased dies in hospital with no next of kin but has a funeral plan in place the local authority are responsible.

Q5 What is provided by the Trust at a public health funeral?

A5 A cremation service at the local crematorium taken by a hospital chaplain

*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.

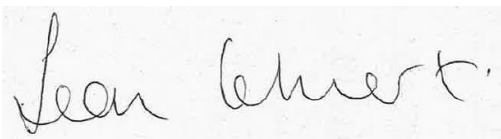
Should you have a complaint about the response or the handling of your request, please also contact my office to request a review of this. If having exhausted the Trust's FOIA complaints process you are still not satisfied, you are entitled to approach the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and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



Jean Lehnert
Data, Security & Protection Manager