Ref: FOIA Reference 2019/20-546

Royal Stoke University Hospital
Quality, Safety and Compliance Department
Newcastle Road
Stoke-on-Trent
Staffordshire
ST4 6QG

Date: 20th January 2020

Email foi@uhnm.nhs.uk

Dear

I am writing in response to your email's dated 18th December and 19th December 2019 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding #1Human Resources - processing of organisation staff, #2 Healthcare Operations department and #3 Information department - coding and activity information.

We contacted you via email 19th December 2019 as UHNM had received several requests that are asking for similar information that were clearly from the same person/company, therefore we were contacting you to inform you that under section 12 of the FOI Act we were aggregating these requests.

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.

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 line 44 is not held centrally, but may be recorded in individual health 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*

On 20th December 2019 we contacted you via email as we required several areas of clarification which we had put into the aggregated request spread sheet.

On 2nd January 2020 you replied with the following*:*

Unfortunately the service I am using to manage this FOI request does not allow me to send attachments. Therefore the spreadsheet has been saved as CSV data. I trust this will suffice and provide the clarification you need:

20191219 Foi ref 546-1920 3 requests aggregated, Information Services Comments, Response from CT , request #1 Human Resources - processing of organisation staff, "How many joiners, movers, and leavers do you process per year?", Do you mean financial or calendar year?, "A typical operation year for your organisation will be fine. If you need specific dates, please use 1st January 2019 to 31st December 2019"

How many staff/whole time equivalents manage this process? Do you have an automated system to manage ESR?, Do you mean financial or calendar year?, Is this the correct comment for this question? Our question is not date-specific.

Do you use a single sign on solution across the organisation to manage the accounts?, "More clarification required - Please clarify what you mean by "manage the accounts" - which accounts are you referring to?"," This refers to the user-accounts within IT systems used by your organisation's to manage a user's access to systems, and their roles within those systems."

"If so, which solution do you have?"

How many people are in your organisation's data quality team? Do you mean HR Data or data quality in general? I am looking to understand for clinical and operational data within your organisation. There will be teams employed to do this task.

Request #2 Healthcare Operations department - information request,, How many staff do you currently employ to undertake RTT validation tasks?, How many more permanent or temporary staff are expected to be needed over the next 12 months?, More clarification required - Please can your clarify which cohort of staff you are referring to - is this to undertake RTT validation or as a Trust as a whole?, RTT tasks please.

How many open RTT pathways do you have currently?, How many staff do you currently employ to undertake clinical coding validation tasks?, How many more permanent or temporary staff are expected to be needed over the next 12 months?, More clarification required - Please clarify which cohort of staff you are referring to - is this to undertake clinical coding validation tasks or as a trust as a whole?, Clinical coding tasks please.

Do you operate and utilise a live bed state system?, "Has your organisation implemented any centralised or 24 hour bed management process, or have an automatic electronic utilisation data capture solution.", "If so, which processes or solutions are in use?", "What is the name, job title, and department contact email address of the primary decision maker for change control of the bed state process?",, How many Urgent Care/Emergency Department staff have access to the spine lookup and validation service to verify demographics at the point of patient registration?, Request #3 Information department - coding and activity information request,, Have you audited your coding in the last year?, "If so, what percentage of the records required re-coding or coding re-validation?", How many e-referrals do you process - per month and year?, "More clarification required - Please can you clarify what you mean by "process" ?","E-Referrals may be from ERS or any other locally implemented e-forms or electronic system. By "process"" I mean the number of records that are received and managed by these interactions."

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How many ERS bookings are made - per month and year? "More clarification required - Please can you clarify what you mean by "ESR bookings", we requested "ERS" which is the NHS e-Referral Service. This would be referrals or appointment bookings via the ERS integration to your PAS or other system"

How many appointment cancellations are processed - per month and year? "More clarification required - Please can you clarify what you mean by "process" "by "process" I mean the action of managing the cancellation of an appointment"

Do you have an automated process for updating General Practitioner information changes? "If not, how are the updates managed and what is the average delay in the updating process?" How many whole time equivalent team members process incorrectly delivered letters? "More clarification required - Please can you clarify what you mean by "incorrectly delivered letters"? This relates with updates to a patient's associated health care professional and GP/Practice association in your systems. If an update to a patient's GP associated, as an example, is not applied to the patient's record in time, correspondence will be delivered to the GP on the record at that point in time. The rejected correspondence would require review and subsequent delivery to the appropriate person/organisation.

My request seeks to understand how many people are responsible for this type of activity. I appreciate that different cases may need differing numbers of people involved however I only seek to understand those who have a daily task or specific role to manage the general cases."

We replied via email with our thanks however, we had found your response above somewhat confusing as there is no differential with our questions and your answers, therefore we re-attached the spread with what we believe you had answered. We require you to confirm that we have understood your responses correctly before we can proceed.

In addition there appeared to have been a typo in our request for clarification (our apologies)

Line 9) Do you have an automated system to manage ESR? please clarify "What do they meant by "manage" ESR"? (Highlighted in yellow)

On 8th January 2020 you replied via email with the following:

"*I do apologise that I was unable to return the spreadsheet in a completed form. The requests for information made have been done so using a communication management platform as opposed to a simple email application. One of the restrictions is that no attachments are able to be added to textual replies to help to prevent the spread of viruses or other malware. Another restriction is that all email addresses included in responses are obfuscated to protect the parties responding from information harvesting. Both protective behaviours I support, but it has meant I've been unable to simplify the process of returning a completed spreadsheet.*

I am happy to confirm that your recent attachment does correctly reflect the clarifications I supplied, and thank you for transposing.

The final clarification
"Line 9) Do you have an automated system to manage ESR? Please clarify "What do they mean by "manage" ESR"? (Highlighted in yellow)"

The ESR is often used as a stand-alone system for management of the person only, and not used to help with the creation of the many staff records needed within organisational systems without considerable human involvement. I am looking to ascertain whether the process of managing staff records from ESR into local systems is solely conducted by people within, or working for, your organisation, or whether any or all of the steps required are processed by batch, macro, or other automated approach which reduces or mitigates any human interaction. An example may be the

creation of local Active Directory accounts using a batch report from ESR, or the automatic addition to any pick list within systems.

I hope this offers you an explanation as to why the spreadsheet has not been simply completed and returned as you requested, and this clarification offers a better understanding of the reason for the question".

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. In order to avoid delay to your response we have provided this attached.

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.

Please refer to the attached spread sheet for all three (3) requests

*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.

Where the Trust owns the copyright in information provided, you may re-use the information in line with the conditions set out in the Open Government Licence v3 which is available at http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/. Where information was created by third parties, you should contact them directly for permission to re-use the information.

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.

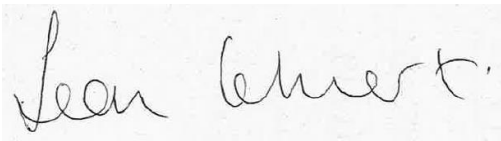If you have any queries related to the response provided please in the first instance contact my office.

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 676474.

Yours,

Jean Lehnert
Information Governance Manager