



**University Hospitals  
of North Midlands**  
NHS Trust

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

Ref: FOIA Reference 2022/23-018

Date: 14<sup>th</sup> June 2022

Email [foi@uhnm.nhs.uk](mailto:foi@uhnm.nhs.uk)

Dear

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your email dated 11th April 2022 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding software and data quality.

**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.**

On 13<sup>th</sup> April we contacted you via email as we required clarification on the specific waiting/tracking list you are referring to? i.e is a cancer wait list manages the same as outpatient wait lists?

On 18<sup>th</sup> May 2022 you replied via email with:  
*'I'm looking for inpatient and outpatient waiting lists for elective care.'*

As of 1<sup>st</sup> 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 a University student looking at the use of software and data quality management in the NHS to aid the recovery and restoration work following the Covid pandemic. To help with my research, I would like you to request the following under the Freedom of Information Act.**



**Do you use a software product to manage your patient tracking list or waiting lists? If so, which product?**

A1 We use the CareFlow Patient Administration System (PAS) to manage our patient waiting lists and use Microsoft Excel 2010 to manage our patient tracking lists (PTL). We also have a Business Intelligence (BI) reporting page on the UHNM Intranet where users can access the latest PTL / BI reports.

**Q2 How many FTE validators do you use to maintain the accuracy of your patient tracking list?**

A2 Currently we employ 6 full time equivalent validators, 2 of these posts are currently vacant and we are in the process of recruiting to back fill these posts due to people leaving the team

**Q3 How much money has been spent on external validators on an annual basis for each of the last 3 years?**

A3 See below:

• 2019/20	17,000
• 2020/21	161,607
• 2021/22	44,316

**Q4 Do you carry out any staff training on RTT rules to improve the data quality of your waiting lists? If yes, please provide a short description of the training provided.**

A4 All our new validators are given a mentor when they start and the mentoring process lasts for a minimum of 3 months, longer if required. Training of new validators takes place mainly on a one to one basis with more experienced members of the team, but we also put on development days sporadically if we feel there are too many gaps in learning.

Training never really stops as we cover all specialties for validation, we do of course factor in the national rules and local access policy into all of our training and business as usual.

**Q5 Who is responsible for the production of your PTLs? Please provide name and job title.**

A5 The exemption which has been relied upon is section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 with regards to the name of the individual.

The disclosure of this information is subject to balancing the legitimate interest to disclose against the rights of the individuals. Upon balancing these two factors, we have found that the rights of the individual outweigh the legitimate interest to disclose. Therefore, it would be unfair to the data subject if this information is disclosed. The disclosure of the name would not add anything further to this request for information.

Furthermore, it would be unfair to disclose the name of the individual to the general public. The individual would expect a right to privacy. They would only expect that their name, job title, telephone number and email address are disclosed to the relevant people in connection with Trust business and also in relation to the discharge of the responsibilities involved in their post. It would not be reasonable to disclose their name to the general public. Furthermore, the release of this information may also lead to a greater number of unsolicited correspondences.

The first condition under section 40(3A) has been contravened as it would not be fair to disclose the name, of the individual. Therefore, the name, of the individual, has been withheld.

- RTT Performance Analyst & Validation Lead
- RTT Training & Improvement Manager

**Q6 Do you use a software tool to track data quality on your patient pathways?**

A6 We use Microsoft Excel to analyse and pivot data outcomes via the patient tracking lists. We did trial some software called Clear PTL but it was decommissioned due to mainly performance issues to the best of my knowledge.

\*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.

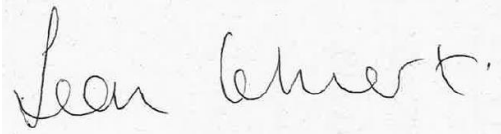
Should you have a complaint about the response or the handling of your request, please also contact my office to request a review of this. If having exhausted the Trust's FOIA complaints process you are still not satisfied, you are entitled to approach the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and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

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light grey background. The signature reads "Jean Lehnert" in a cursive script.

Jean Lehnert  
**Data, Security & Protection Manager**