



**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 2021/22-542

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

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

Dear

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your email dated 26th January 2022 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding palliative care services.

**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 1<sup>st</sup> November 2014 University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust (UHM) 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 under the Freedom of Information Act to request information about the provision of specialist palliative care services by University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust. NHS Cannock Chase CCG has indicated that the Trust may hold this information.**

**In order to assist you to meet this request I have provided the following definitions of the terms used in my request, below:**

***Palliative care* is the care and support given to people with life-limiting conditions. It focuses on managing pain and other symptoms over the whole of the time a person lives with their condition and aims to give the best quality of life possible. It may be**



provided by specialist or non-specialist clinicians. It includes practical and emotional support people and those close to them need in order to spend the time they have left in the way they choose.

**Specialist palliative care** encompasses hospice care as well as a range of other specialist advice, physicians in palliative medicine or other suitably trained practitioners, such as clinical nurse specialists in palliative care.

**My questions:**

**1. What specialist palliative care services are provided by the Trust for the financial year 2021-22?**

A1 Palliative care aims to improve the quality of life for patients living with a life limiting illness (cancer and non-cancer). We see patients at any point of their illness, not just at end of their life. We are able to support patients who are still receiving active treatment and early referrals are encouraged.

The hospital specialist palliative care team provide a Trust wide service for adults at UHNM (covering both sites) and is available from 9am-5pm, 7 days a week at RSUH and 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday at County Hospital (with telephone advice available from the RSUH at the weekend)

- Reason for Referral:
- Pain and symptom control
- Emotional or Spiritual support for patients, relatives and carers
- Provide advice about practical problems relating to illness, including financial and social
- Advice to the MDT on the treatment plan
- Advance care planning
- Complex discharge planning
- Assessment for hospice inpatient care on behalf of hospices
- Care of patients in last days of life

**Referral Process:**

Referrals may be made by healthcare professionals working at UHNM (e.g. Dr's, Nurses, Allied Healthcare Professionals) or other organisations (e.g. hospice). Direct referrals from patients and carers are also welcomed

The main components of specialist level palliative care include, but are not limited to:

- In depth specialist knowledge to undertake assessment and management of physical, psychological and spiritual symptoms to reduce symptoms, suffering and distress;
- supporting analysis of complex clinical decisions-making challenges where medical and personal interests are finely balanced by applying relevant ethical and legal reasoning alongside clinical assessment; providing care and support to those important to the person receiving care, including facilitating bereavement care;
- Providing specialist advice and support to the wider care team who is providing direct core level palliative care to the person.

**Q2 How many of the following specialist palliative care professionals are employed/funded by the Trust for the financial year 2021-22?**

- **Consultants in Palliative Medicine**
- **GPs with a specialism in palliative care**
- **Specialist Nurses employed as a clinical nurse specialist or a consultant nurse in palliative care**
- **Allied health professionals**

A2 See below:

- Consultants in Palliative Medicine- 4 (3.54 Whole time equivalent)
- GPs with special interest in Palliative Care 0
- Specialist Nurses employed as a clinical nurse specialist or a consultant nurse in palliative care – 15 nurses (11.8 whole time equivalent)
- AHPs 0

**Q3 How many specialist palliative care beds are provided by the CCG for the financial year 2021-22 in the following settings?**

- **In hospitals**
- **In hospices**
- **In nursing homes**
- **In another facility**

A3 There are no specialist palliative care beds provided by the CCG at UHNM. However, UHNM provides 10 palliative care beds on ward 12 at County Hospital.

**Q4 During the financial year 2021-22, how many visits have been made by specialist palliative care professionals employed/funded by the Trust to patients who died at home?**

A4 UHNM provides 10 palliative care beds on ward 12 at County Hospital.

\*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.

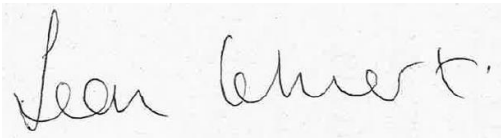
Should you have a complaint about the response or the handling of your request, please also contact my office to request a review of this. If having exhausted the Trust's FOIA complaints process you are still not satisfied, you are entitled to approach the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and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



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