



Ref: FOIA Reference 2024/25-163

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

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> August 2024

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

Dear Sir/Madam

am writing to acknowledge receipt of your email dated 4th June 2024 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding wet AMD

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 enquiring about ophthalmology - specifically the treatment of patients with Wet age-related macular degeneration. When diagnosed, patients require treatment involving regular injections into the eye and repeated OCT scans.**

The questions I have are as follows:

**For patients being treated for wet-AMD, what tariffs do you apply? I am interested to know:**

- a. Do you use national tariffs for outpatient appointments, scans, and for treatments. If so, which ones do you use? Please provide HRG codes where possible.
- b. If locally negotiated tariffs are used, please provide details of these. If 'bundled' (e.g. include treatments/scans etc), please advise on what is included in the cost. If 'unbundled' (e.g. each element is costed separately), please advise on the locally agreed price for each element

A1 The national tariff is used for the outpatient procedure HRG BZ86B.

**Q2 NICE guidance advises that patients referred for Wet AMD should start treatment within 14 days of referral. Please could you advise what percentage of Wet AMD patients commence treatment within 14 days of referral at your Trust?**

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 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*

However: we can answer is that having been seen we try and inject the patients within 7 days of their first review. We create extra injection clinics as required to ensure that this is achieved

**Q3 What is the average wait to be seen from the point of referral for Wet-AMD at your Trust?**

A3 This is impossible to find looking at codes, as there is 1 new patient code for all our patients. All new patients are seen within 7 days of their referral if they are wet AMD. We will set up extra new patient clinics and even see them through lunchtimes to ensure all are seen. The only ones that aren't seen on time are if they cancel themselves.

Therefore: 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 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*

\*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](http://www.ico.org.uk).

Yours,



**Rachel Montinaro**  
Data Security and Protection Manager - Records