



Ref: FOIA Reference 2019/20-602

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

Date: 27<sup>th</sup> January 2020

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

Dear

I am writing in response to your email dated 20<sup>th</sup> January 2020 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding surgical mesh.

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 concerned about recent reports in the media about surgical mesh problems. It appears that the NHS use around 100 different types of mesh. It is stated that many of these types of mesh have no research regarding their use.**

**One professor who was interviewed says it is impossible to accurately determine the quality or effectiveness if so many meshes are used.**

**Doctors medicine is evidence based we are told. It does not appear that these meshes have been researched properly.**

A1 The FOI Act 2000 is for the release of information that is held/recorded and does not cover the opinions of persons regarding suppliers, systems or procedures, therefore this information is not held.

**Q2 So why are your surgeons using mesh which has no clinical research behind them?**

A2 This information is not held and therefore we recommend that you address your concerns with your surgeon

**Q3 Can you list the kinds of mesh which are safe, will not disintegrate or cause issues in the patient?**

A3 As answer 2.

**Q4 Does the Royal College of Surgeons determine which kinds of mesh are used by its members or does the NHS tell the surgeon what to do?**

A4 As answer 2.

**Q5 As I am awaiting a minor op for an inguinal hernia repair at the North Staffs Hospital I am obviously deeply concerned as I heard and saw the report about mesh.**

A5 This is a statement therefore UHNM is unable to answer

**Q6 I feel distinctly uncomfortable thinking that I may have issues with non-researched meshes being used. Can you let me know which is to be used in my operation?**

A6 As answer 2.

\*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).

If following review of the responses I can be of any further assistance please contact my secretary on 01782 676474.

Yours,



University Hospitals  
of North Midlands  
NHS Trust

Jean Lehnert  
Information Governance Manager

