



**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 2024/25-048

Date: 22nd May 2024

Email foi@uhn.nhs.uk

Dear Sir/ Madam

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your email dated 17th April 2024 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding bariatric journey.

On 18th April 2024 we contacted you via email with the following:
To continue with your request we require clarification on the following:

Do you mean-

How many patients were put onto the waiting list 1st November 2022, and how many have since had their operations from this list??

In addition: When you refer to starting your journey is this from the date you were referred into the trust or when a decision was made to add you to the inpatient waiting list for surgery?

On 19th April 2024 you replied via email with:

'I have been deciding the best way to get the information I require.

What I want to know is how many Stoke On Trent patients on the bariatric pathway who got referred to see the consultants on tier 4 after I was referred to Tier 4 in March 2023 have seen the consultants and had their operations compared to the countless of Chester hospital patients

Also how many Stoke On Trent patients have had their operations since I was referred to the pathway in Nov 2021 compared to the countless of Chester patients.'

We replied via email with:

I have passed to your comments to the departments, but I am still being asked for clarification from you:

sorry we need to the requester to explain what they mean by "Stoke-on-Trent" patients are these patients referred to UHNM no matter where they live or just patients who live in Stoke-on-Trent who have been referred in,

you replied with the following:

'What I am trying to find out is about anyone who has been referred to UHNM during the dates I have given'



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.

**Q1 Elizabeth Warrington has asked me to contact you direct reference my complaint about my bariatric journey.
The date I started on the journey was Nov 2022 to now, I want to know how many people that started the journey after me at Stoke on Trent have already had their operation.**

A1 UHNM cover a large demographic and not just the Stoke-on-Trent area, so the figures provided reflect this.

We do not hold daily waiting list snapshot positions; therefore, we are unable to say how many patients were added at a particular point of time. We only hold end of month wait list snapshots.

Also, we are unable to truly identify “Bariatric Patients” as there is no specialty or treatment code for them, so they fall under the treatment code Upper GI surgery. To try to identify Bariatric Patients waiting for a procedure, once a decision has been made to undertake the procedure, we have to look at the intended procedure code of the waiting list entry, however the procedure codes are universal and can used to treat other conditions.

Therefore, to truly understand those who are waiting for bariatric surgery we would have to manually review every patient to ascertain the reason for the surgery.

OPCS Coding used ('G331', 'G332', 'G336', 'G285', 'G303', 'G304', 'G305')

The number of patients on the wait list as of the 31st October 2022 awaiting surgery was 334, however there are still 20 patients from this snapshot who are still waiting to have their procedure as at 30th April 2024. For reference the number of patients on the WL as of 30th April 2024 who are waiting for the above procedure is = 225.

This however does not reflect when the patient started their journey as all patients have varying criteria and requirements before surgery is planned i.e. weight loss. To provide further information, we would need to review all records of those on the bariatric pathway and this would be deemed as excessive (exemption applied see below).

UHNM do refer patients to various other health organisations such as the Countess of Chester to have their surgery procedure, but these patients remain on the UHNM wait list and will be included in the figures provided. Those who are referred outside of UHNM will meet a criteria i.e. low risk

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 your questions 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.

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.

Yours,



Rachel Montinaro
Data Security and Protection Manager - Records