



**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 2022/23-022

Date: 30<sup>th</sup> May 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 Ophthalmology.

**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 2022 we contacted you via email as we required the following clarification on the specific part of the eye that the procedure is carried out on or the specific procedure in order for our clinical coding team to assist

On 14<sup>th</sup> April 2022 you replied via email with:

*'It is a retinal condition and as such affects the back of the eye, not the front (so unrelated to the teams that deal with cataracts or corneal conditions).'*

*Looking at your website under sub-specialist services:*

<https://www.uhnm.nhs.uk/our-services/ophthalmology/>

- *Vitreous and Retinal problems*
- *Diabetes'*



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 How many current diabetic retinopathy (including DMO) patients do you have?\***

A1 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 individual health records. In order to confirm whether this information is held we would therefore have to individually access all individual 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 individual 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*

**Q2 How many diabetic retinopathy (including DMO) patients do you have that are currently being monitored and held at "wait and see" but not yet progressed to needing any treatments (injections/laser/implant)?\***

A2 We are unable to check every ophthalmology patient currently on a RTT pathway as we are unable to identify the reason why the patient is on the RTT pathway. Therefore:

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**Q3 How many diabetic retinopathy (including DMO) patients do you have that have received treatment (injections/laser/implants) in the year April 2019-March 2020 inclusive (i.e. pre COVID-19)?\***

A3 Diabetic Retinopathy is a co-morbidity and is coded on the inpatient record whether the patient is been treated for that condition or not. The treatments suggested above can be used to treat a range of eye conditions for example a lens replacement is also used to treat a person with cataracts, also some of the treatments for example injections are given during outpatient appointments and we do not apply clinical coding to outpatient appointments. Therefore we are unable to say how many patients have been treated without reviewing all the patients who have either attended a relevant ophthalmology appointment or been admitted for treatment who also have the Diabetic Retinopathy

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**Q4 How many diabetic retinopathy (including DMO) patients do you have that have received treatment (injections/laser/implants) in the year April 2020-March 2021 inclusive (i.e. during COVID-19)?\***

A4 Diabetic Retinopathy is a co-morbidity and is coded on the inpatient record whether the patient is been treated for that condition or not. The treatments suggested above can be used to treat a range of eye conditions for example a lens replacement is also used to treat a person with cataracts, also some of the treatments for example injections are given during outpatient appointments and we do not apply clinical coding to outpatient appointments. Therefore we are unable to say how many patients have been treated without reviewing all the patients who have either attended a relevant ophthalmology appointment or been admitted for treatment who also have the Diabetic Retinopathy- Ophthalmology appointments are in excess of 1000

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 individual health records. In order to confirm whether this information is held we would therefore have to individually access all individual 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 individual 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*

**Q5 How many injections (Avastin/bevacizumab, Eylea/afibercept, Lucentis/ranibizumab) have been used for diabetic retinopathy (including DMO) patients in the year April 2019-March 2020 inclusive (i.e. pre COVID-19)? Please break down by treatment.\***

A5 Injection treatment/procedures for Diabetic Retinopathy are undertaken during an outpatient appointment, as we do not apply clinical coding to outpatient appointments we are unable to identify how many procedures were undertaken.

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, this may be recorded in individual health records. In order to confirm whether this information is held we would therefore have to individually access all individual 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

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**Q6 How many injections (Avastin/bevacizumab, Eylea/aflibercept, Lucentis/ranibizumab) have been used for diabetic retinopathy (including DMO) patients in the year April 2020-March 2021 inclusive (i.e. pre COVID-19)? Please break down by treatment.\***

**\*Please break down by hospital within your Trust**

A6 Injection treatment/procedures for Diabetic Retinopathy are undertaken during an outpatient appointment, as we do not apply clinical coding to outpatient appointments we are unable to identify how many procedures were undertaken.

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, this may be recorded in individual health records. In order to confirm whether this information is held we would therefore have to individually access all individual 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 individual 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.

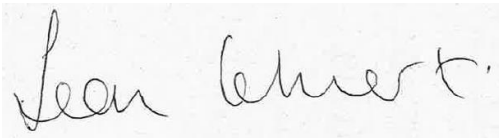
Should you have a complaint about the response or the handling of your request, please also contact my office to request a review of this. If having exhausted the Trust's FOIA complaints process you are still not satisfied, you are entitled to approach the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and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