University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust

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

Email foi@uhnm.nhs.uk

Ref: FOIA Reference 2020/21-066

Date: 9th June 2020

Dear Employees of [redacted]-

I am writing in response to your emails dated 15th May 2020 and 27th May 2020 (received into our office 28th May) requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding MS drug usage (previous reference 041-2021) and intra-vitreal injections/implants.

On our acknowledgment we added the following statement:
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 28th May 2020 we contacted you both to inform you that under section 12 of the FOI Act we would be aggregating your two requests;

The section 12 exemption states:

The authority can combine related requests received within a period of 60 consecutive days from:
- The same person or
- People who appear to be acting in concert or in pursuance of a campaign.

Request #1

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 question 2 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*

Under section 16 of the FOI Act we are required to provide requestors with advice and assistance where possible. We would therefore like to advise you that if your request is shortened to just question 1 we are able to comply within the 18 hour time frame. In order to avoid delay to your response we have provided this below.

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.

Request #1

Q1 **I have a Freedom of Information request regarding Multiple Sclerosis. Could you kindly provide the answers to the questions mentioned below?**
1. How many multiple sclerosis patients have been treated with these drugs in the past 6 months?

- **Ampyra (fampyra)**
- **Aubagio (teriflunomide)**
- **Avonex (interferon beta-1a)**
- **Betaferon (interferon beta-1b)**
- **Brabio (glatiramer acetate)**
- **Copaxone (glatiramer acetate)**
- **Extavia (beta interferon-1b)**
- **Gilenya (fingolimod)**
- **Lemtrada (alemtuzumab)**
- **Mavenclad (cladribine)**
- **Mayzent (siponimod)**
- **Ocrevus (ocrelizumab)**
- **Plegridy (peginterferon beta-1a)**
- **Rebif (beta interferon-1a)**
- **Tecfidera (dimethyl fumarate)**
- **Tysabri (natalizumab)**
- **Vumerity (diroximel fumarate)**
- **Zeposia (ozanimod)**
- **Zinbryta (daclizumab)**

A1 We are unable to provide the information you require in the requested format as to release this data could lead to the identification of the person(s) involved due to the low numbers involved, and would breach the Trusts obligations under Data Protection Act 2018. Accordingly, this aspect of your request is exempt from disclosure under the terms of Section 40(2) of the FOI

Act. *Personal information.* However as the Trust is committed to openness and transparency we can band the number.

This exemption is an absolute exemption and therefore no consideration of the public interest test is needed.

The Data in the answer to Q1 shows the number of patients that have been dispensed a product from the list provided using the pharmacy stock management system from 01/11/2019 to 30/04/2020. Medical coding can't identify MS patients specifically. We have therefore based our data collection on the Neurology Speciality which should give a realistic estimation of the information that has been requested.

Drug	Patient Count
Alemtuzumab [lemtrada]	18
Dimethyl Fumarate [tecfidera]	151
Fingolimod [gilenya]	74
Glatiramer [copaxone]	58
Interferon Beta-1A [avonex]	22
Interferon Beta-1A [rebif rebidose]	<5
Interferon Beta-1A [rebif]	35
Interferon Beta-1B [betaferon]	<5
Natalizumab [tysabri]	249
Ocrelizumab [ocrevus]	140
Peginterferon Beta-1A [plegridy]	32
Teriflunomide [aubagio]	16

Q2 How many MS patients have been diagnosed with relapsing (RRMS), primary progressive (PPMS) or secondary progressive (SPMS) MS?

- **RRMS**
- **PPMS**
- **SPMS**
- **Not known**

A2 Section 12 and 14 exemptions as detailed above.

Request #2

Q1 Within your Trust how many intra-vitreal injections/implants of each of the following drugs have been used in the four-month period from January to April 2020:

- **Abicipar pegol**
- **Aflibercept**
- **Bevacizumab**
- **Brolucizumab**
- **Dexamethasone**
- **Fluocinolone**

- **Ranibizumab**

A1 We are unable to provide the information you require in the requested format as to release this data could lead to the identification of the person(s) involved due to the low numbers involved, and would breach the Trusts obligations under Data Protection Act 2018. Accordingly, this aspect of your request is exempt from disclosure under the terms of Section 40(2) of the FOI Act. *Personal information*. However as the Trust is committed to openness and transparency we can band the number.

This exemption is an absolute exemption and therefore no consideration of the public interest test is needed.

Aflibercept	850
Bevacizumab	85
Dexamethasone	24
Fluocinolone Acetonide	<5
Ranibizumab	1799

Q2 If your Trust is able to identify <u>intra-vitreal injections/implants</u> by eye condition, please provide the number of injections/implants used from January to April 2020, for each of the following conditions:

- **Wet Age Related Macular Degeneration (wAMD)**
- **Abicipar pegol**
- **Aflibercept**
- **Bevacizumab**
- **Brolucizumab**
- **Dexamethasone**
- **Fluocinolone**
- **Ranibizumab**
- **Diabetic Macular Oedema (DMO)**
- **Abicipar pegol**
- **Aflibercept**
- **Bevacizumab**
- **Brolucizumab**
- **Dexamethasone**
- **Fluocinolone**
- **Ranibizumab**
- **Retinal Vein Occlusion - Central (CRVO)**
- **Abicipar pegol**
- **Aflibercept**
- **Bevacizumab**
- **Brolucizumab**
- **Dexamethasone**
- **Fluocinolone**
- **Ranibizumab**
- **Retinal Vein Occlusion - Branch (BRVO)**
- **Abicipar pegol**

- **Aflibercept**
- **Bevacizumab**
- **Brolucizumab**
- **Dexamethasone**
- **Fluocinolone**
- **Ranibizumab**
- **Visual impairment due to choroidal neovascularization secondary to pathologic myopia (mCNV)**
- **Abicipar pegol**
- **Aflibercept**
- **Bevacizumab**
- **Brolucizumab**
- **Dexamethasone**
- **Fluocinolone**
- **Ranibizumab**

A2 We are unable to provide the information you require in the requested format as to release this data could lead to the identification of the person(s) involved due to the low numbers involved, and would breach the Trusts obligations under Data Protection Act 2018. Accordingly, this aspect of your request is exempt from disclosure under the terms of Section 40(2) of the FOI Act. *Personal information.* However as the Trust is committed to openness and transparency we can band the number.

This exemption is an absolute exemption and therefore no consideration of the public interest test is needed.

Wet Age Related Macular Degeneration (WAMD)	
Aflibercept	6
Bevacizumab	<5
Ranibizumab	<5
Diabetic Macular Oedema (DMO)	0
Aflibercept	12
Bevacizumab	15
Dexamethasone	<5
Fluocinolone	<5
Ranibizumab	7
Retinal Vein Occlusion - Central (CRVO) / Branch (BRVO)	0
Aflibercept	<5
Visual impairment due to choroidal neovascularization secondary to pathologic myopia (MCNV)	0
Aflibercept	<5
Bevacizumab	<5
Ranibizumab	<5

University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust

*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.

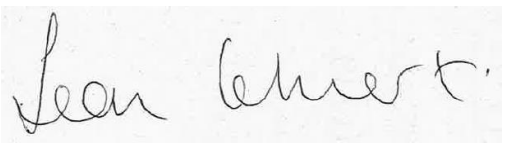
Should you have a complaint about the response or the handling of your request, please also contact my office to request a review of this. If having exhausted the Trust's FOIA complaints process you are still not satisfied, you are entitled to approach the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and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

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

Committed to improving working lives of staff

Positive About Disabled People