



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 2021/22-005

Date: 20th April 2021

Email foi@uhnm.nhs.uk

Dear

I am writing in response to your email dated 6th April 2021 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding covid-19

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

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 question(s) 4 and 5 is not held centrally, but may be recorded in individual health/death records. In order to confirm whether this information is held we would therefore have to individually access all individual health/death 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/death 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*

As of 1st November 2014 University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust (UHM) 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 would like to request the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.



1. Total number of recorded Influenza deaths for the period 01/01/2018 – 31/12/2018.

A1 The number of patients confirmed with influenza between January 1st and December 31st 2018 who died within 28 days of a positive test was 140.

Q2 Total number of recorded Influenza deaths for the period 01/01/2019 – 31/12/2019.

A2 The number of patients confirmed with influenza between January 1st and December 31st 2019 who died within 28 days of a positive test was 307.

Q3 Total number of recorded Influenza deaths for the period 01/01/2020 – 31/12/2020.

A3 The number of patients confirmed with influenza between January 1st and December 31st 2020 who died within 28 days of a positive test was 12.

Q4 Total number of deaths from Covid-19 (where Covid-19 is the only cause of death reported) for the period 01/01/2020 – 31/12/2020.

A4 Section 12 as detailed above; note: UHNM has been answering Covid-19 related FOI's throughout the pandemic, further information can be found on our disclosure log at the following link, <http://www.uhnm.nhs.uk/about-us/regulatory-information/freedom-of-information-publication-scheme/freedom-of-information-disclosure-log/>

In addition.

1. This information is available and we follow the reporting criteria mandated by NHS Digital as we are required to submit this information and it is publicly available (at the links below). We are counting COVID-19 deaths as per the national guidance. The figure, and a description of the definition we are using, are published daily and can be found via the links below:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/causesofdeath> <https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/>
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/articles/coronaviruscovid19/latestinsights>

2. We are not able to provide the number of deaths with NO co-morbidities. This is because this information is not stored on our electronic PAS system. To identify these patients would require a member of staff reviewing each record to identify whether there were co-morbidities.
3. As part of our due diligence in determining whether the Section 12 exemption was appropriate, we took one patient at random and identified multiple contributing factors as to why the patient passed away (in the example we reviewed there were 8). It would require a clinician to review the paper medical record, (which in the majority of cases have been archived to off-site storage), and such a review may not be able to definitively determine a single cause of death. Taking this example as a base line (the length of time to identify the record and review - approx. 2 minutes) and multiplying that by the 1051 patients concerned (as at 19 January 2021) would take 35 hours, which is far in excess of the 18 hours listed in the FOI legislation as a reasonable amount of time for one person to collate the data.

Q5 Total number of deaths with Covid-19 (where Covid-19 is not the only cause of death reported but where other co-morbidities are mentioned) for the period 01/01/2020 – 31/12/2020

A5 As answer 4

*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.

If following review of the responses I can be of any further assistance please contact my secretary on 01782 671612.

Yours,



University Hospitals
of North Midlands
NHS Trust

Jean Lehnert
Data, Security & Protection Manager

