



Ref: FOIA Reference 2020/21-550

Date: 15th March 2021

Email foi@uhnm.nhs.uk

Dear

I am writing in response to your email dated 27th February 2021 (received into our office 1st March) requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding AP spend management

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

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 I am interested in your AP spend management processes
Questions:**

1. What is your current invoice process for handling supplier invoices, from receipt to when its posted in the ERP and ready for payment?

A1 Our AP process is outsourced and so all supplier invoices are dealt with outside of the Trust. Upon receipt invoices are registered and then through our Purchase Invoice Management module are either approved for payment or matched to purchase orders and receipts. When fully authorised or receipted the invoices will be paid.

Q2 What systems do you use for managing and processing invoices and catalogues

A2 eFin and eProc from Advanced Business Systems (ABS)

Q3 How many invoices were processed in FY19-20?

A3 131,134

Q4 In what format do you currently receive invoices?

A4 Mainly electronically (preferred) but some are sent in paper format by post.

Q5 Do you print your emailed or pdf invoices?

A5 Only when required. Not for the vast majority.

Q6 Do Accounts Payable check every invoice received?

A6 The invoices are checked for correctness as part of the authorisation process.

Q7 What is the current split between PO and non PO invoices?

A7 In 2019/20 of the 131,134 invoices processed, 57,443 were non PO (including pharmacy feed as they use a separate system of their own) and 73,691 were PO.

Q8 If you have an invoice matching process, is this automated or manual?

A8 Automated for PO invoices. If there is a valid PO with sufficient funds to match to a receipt and an approved invoice then the system will automatically match them.

Q9 How many FTE's do you have in your AP team who process invoices?

A9 None at UHNM for processing invoices as the function is outsourced. We have 2 FTEs to assist from a Trust perspective

Q10 What % of invoices were paid late in FY19-20?

A10 6.21% of invoices by number paid outside of better payments practice terms in 2019/20.

Q11 What processes or solutions do you have in place for employees to submit and reclaim expenses?

A11 Processed electronically through Giltbyte Easy, authorisation is confirmed and then Easy uploads to the payroll system for payment

Q12 How many expense claims were submitted by employees in FY19-20?

A12 9301

Q13 Do you use OCR (optical character recognition) to scan invoices and/or expenses?

A13 Yes for invoices, no for expenses. These are manually entered by employees.

Q14 Have there been investigations relating to expense compliance in your organisation in the last 24 months? If so, how many?

A14 Tests on expenses form part of the Internal Audit process and were carried out in 2019/20.

*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,



University Hospitals
of North Midlands
NHS Trust

Jean Lehnert
Data, Security & Protection Manager

