



Ref: FOIA Reference 2020/21-349

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

Date: 17th December 2020

Email foi@uhnm.nhs.uk

Dear

I am writing in response to your email dated 19th November 2020 (received into our office 20th November) requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding cancelled procedures.

On the same day we contacted you via email as we required clarification on what you meant by “push back”

On 26th November 2020 you replied via email with the following:
“By ‘pushed back’, I mean delayed/postponed. I.e. the time between the planned date of an operation/appointment that did not end up going ahead and the date it actually took place. No specific reasons behind the cancellations/delays are necessary.”

NB: 2019-2020 is referring to the period between 01/01/19 to 01/01/20. 2020-date is referring to the period between 02/01/20 to present date/date FOI request was received”.

On the same day we contacted you via email as we required further clarification, we asked:

- Mammography – as in ANY mammography exam or specifically for breast screening programs ?

- When you are talking about ‘cancellations’ with regards to mammography
 - o Are you meaning permanent cancellations – where the patient hasn’t been rebooked (and won’t have the activity)
- Or
 - o Temporary cancellations – such as postponing / rescheduling the appointment
 - This can be by the Hospital or by the Patient

- If 1 patient has been postponed say 3 times – would you want a count of 1 – by patient, or 3 – by times postponed?

- Appointments made via urgent cancer referrals – is this in relation to OP appointments only or is it intended to include Imaging activity?

On 1st December 2020 you replied via email with the following:

“By mammograms, I refer to breast cancer screenings.”

When I refer to 'cancellations', I mean permanent cancellations i.e. appointment that never happened and will never happen. Temporary cancellations where the appointments are rebooked can be included in the second question.

When I requested information on appointments/surgery that has been 'pushed back' (i.e. postponed/rearranged), I am looking for the time period between the first planned date of the procedure/appointment and the date it actually took place/future date that it has been rescheduled for. The number of times one appointment/surgery has been rescheduled is not relevant.

When I wrote 'appointments made via urgent cancer referrals', I am referencing a patient's first appointment with a doctor at the trust after being given an urgent cancer referral by their GP - does this answer your question?"

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 This is a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. My request relates to the backlog of appointments within the University Hospitals of North Midlands.

I would like to request the following information relating to the following periods:

1. How many of the following scheduled procedures/appointments were cancelled by the Trust:

- i) Elective operations**
- ii) Appointments made via urgent cancer referrals**
- iii) Mammograms**
- iv) Organ transplant operations**

During the following periods:

- i) 2019-2020**
- ii) 2020-to date**

NB. I do not require the reasons for the cancellations.

A1 See below:

i) Elective operations	Data unavailable for Elective Operations / Appointments as there is no notion of 'Permanent Cancellations'			
ii) Appointments made via urgent cancer referrals	As per your clarification (<i>When I refer to 'cancellations', I mean permanent cancellations</i>) there is no notion of 'Permanent Cancellations'			
iii) Mammograms	Mammography			
	Cancellation type	2019	2020	Grand Total
	Grand Total	88	60	148
Note:				

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mammography Modality for Requests made via GP 2 week wait or Outpatient 2 week wait (cancer referrals) OR where referral source is Breast screening (standard screening, not necessarily cancer related) • Where a patient has had a temporary cancellation and is subsequently permanently cancelled – they're classed as permanently cancelled • Where patients have been postponed multiple times the Wait profile is taken from the earliest cancellation date to their 'latest' Appointment date • Temporary cancellations which do not have an up to date appointment date are classed as unknown as we're not in a position to indicate how long they may be waiting or whether they should be reclassified as a permanent cancellation • Permanent cancellation reasons may be patient cancellations or duplicate requests (for example) – volume without an understanding of reason may skew the data unfavourably
iv) Organ transplant operations	Not applicable to UHNM

Q2 How many of the following scheduled procedures/appointments were pushed back by the Trust:

- i) Elective operations**
- ii) Appointments made via urgent cancer referrals**
- iii) Mammograms**
- iv) Organ transplant operations**

For the following time frames:

- i) Up to one month**
- ii) Up to three months**
- iii) Up to six months**
- iv) Up to a year**
- v) Indefinitely**

During the following periods:

- i) 2019-2020**
- ii) 2020-to date**

NB. I do not require the reasons behind the delay/re-scheduling.

Please provide the information in an electronic format or an Excel spread sheet.

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 numbers as being <5. See below:

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

Mammography

Cancellation type	2019	2020
Indefinite	18	21
<=30days	62	35
>30 - <=92days	<5	
>180 - <= 365 days		<5
Unknown	5	<5

Note:

- Mammography Modality for Requests made via GP 2 week wait or Outpatient 2 week wait (cancer referrals) OR where referral source is Breast screening (standard screening, not necessarily cancer related)
- Where a patient has had a temporary cancellation and is subsequently permanently cancelled – they're classed as permanently cancelled
- Where patients have been postponed multiple times the Wait profile is taken from the earliest cancellation date to their 'latest' Appointment date
- Temporary cancellations which do not have an up to date appointment date are classed as unknown as I'm not in a position to indicate how long they may be waiting or whether they should be reclassified as a permanent cancellation
- Permanent cancellation reasons may be patient cancellations or duplicate requests (for example) – volume without an understanding of reason may skew the data unfavourably

Elective Operations 'pushed back'

Last minute hospital non clinical cancellations (reportable cancellations),
Patients who have been admitted/removed from the waiting list as Patient Admitted
Electively following the cancellation:

Year	Months from Cancellation to Admission										
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2019/20	1532	165	48	26	12	14	15	16	6	<5	<5
2020/21	297	26	6	<5	<5	<5	<5				

Appointments made via Urgent Cancer Referrals 'Pushbacks',
GP Referral with a 2 week wait priority and
Patients who have attended a first appointment following a hospital
cancellation:

Year	Months from Cancellation to 1st Appt											
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11

2019/20	1245	20	<5	<5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<5
2020/21	897	<5	<5	0	0	0	0					

*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.

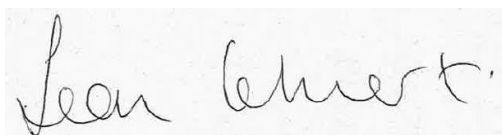
Should you have a complaint about the response or the handling of your request, please also contact my office to request a review of this. If having exhausted the Trust's FOIA complaints process you are still not satisfied, you are entitled to approach the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and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

