



Ref: FOIA Reference 2018/210

Royal Stoke University Hospital
Quality, Safety and Compliance Department
Newcastle Road
Stoke-on-Trent
Staffordshire
ST4 6QG

Date: 17th July 2018

Tel: 01782 676474
Email FOI@uhn.nhs.uk

Dear

I am writing in response to your email dated 11th July 2018 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding upfront charging for overseas visitors.

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 request is similar (but different in critical respects) as one I sent earlier this year. I apologise for sending this new request; I am sending this new request due to significant inconsistencies in how Trusts understood my previous request, especially regarding patients who had declined treatment. The Trust may aggregate this request with my previous request for section 12 purposes where the Trust provided a response to my earlier request. However, please note that I am not acting in concert with any other party, and my request should not be aggregated with requests sent by any other party.

This request has eight questions. In this request, "NHS healthcare treatment" specifically excludes private patients seeking to use paid-for private services offered by the Trust. It includes non-urgent follow-ups to urgent healthcare treatment.

1. Does the Trust impose upfront charges for non-urgent NHS healthcare treatment to overseas visitors, migrants and former UK residents who are ineligible for free healthcare under government guidelines? If not, please explain why, in the context of those guidelines.

If the answer to question 1 is 'no', the Trust need not provide responses to questions 2-8.

A1 The Trust does impose upfront charges for non-urgent NHS healthcare treatment to overseas visitors, migrants and former UK residents who are ineligible for free healthcare under government guidelines.

Q2 The number of overseas visitors, migrants and former UK residents who were charged upfront for NHS healthcare treatment by the Trust since October 2017 - please note this includes patients who did not subsequently proceed with the treatment
If the answer to question 2 is 'zero', the Trust need not provide responses to questions 3-8.

A2 One

Q3 The total costs charged for the treatments referred to in question 2 (including where the patient did not proceed with the treatment)

A3 £155

Q4 The number of overseas visitors, migrants and former UK residents who did not proceed with NHS healthcare treatment by the Trust after being quoted an upfront charge (timeframe is since October 2017).

Notes to question 4:

- Sending an invoice to a patient for an upfront charge counts as quoting an upfront charge
- Patients who did not proceed with treatment include those who declined treatment and those who simply did not attend scheduled treatment, as well as any patients who were refused treatment by the Trust

A4 One

Q5 Of the number of patients provided in response to question 4, please state how many did not attend scheduled treatment/appointment (rather than cancelling in advance)

Note to question 5:

- If the Trust does not record information in a manner that would enable question 5 to be answered within the section 12 cost limit, please state that the information is 'not held' for this question and process the remainder of this request

A5 One

Q6 What was the financial loss to the Trust caused by the missed scheduled treatment/appointments referred to in response to question 5?

Note to question 6:

- If the Trust does not record information in a manner that would enable question 6 to be answered within the section 12 cost limit, please state that the information is 'not held' for this question and process the remainder of this request

A6 Not applicable

Q7 Any data the Trust holds on the reasons for the refusal/inability of the patients referred in response to question 4 to pay the imposed upfront charges (such as preference to return home for treatment, or inability to meet the cost of treatment)

A7 Not applicable

Q8 Any data the Trust holds on the conditions the patients referred to in response to question 4 wished to be treated for (this may be provided as categories of healthcare, such as ENT and nephrology), or alternatively the treatments that were subject to the imposed charges (these may be grouped into over-arching categories for data protection reasons)

A8 Not applicable

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 676474.

Yours,



Leah Carlisle
Deputy Head of Quality, Safety & Compliance