



**University Hospitals  
of North Midlands**  
NHS Trust

Ref: FOIA Reference 2022/23-149

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

Date: 18<sup>th</sup> July 2022

Email [foi@uhnm.nhs.uk](mailto:foi@uhnm.nhs.uk)

Dear

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your email dated 20th June 2022 (sent to the complaints department) requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding transport

**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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 Question on Patients Transport = the responses in red lifted from the email sent to you from complaints**

1. Are we right to assume that ERS have a contract with a University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust, then they subcontract it out to a taxi company, from Burton on Trent, to help provide a backup service? **This information needs to be requested as an FOI**
2. Where can we find a copy of this contract with ERS or can you provide it? **This information needs to be requested as an FOI**



3. When Renal patients are due off Dialysis the unit contacts ERS to organise an ambulance to come and pick patients up, if there are no drivers available then ERS send a taxi instead. Is this correct? **We will speak to ERS for a response**
4. Why are dialysis patients no longer classed as “Priority Patients ”? **We will speak to ERS for a response**
5. Could you also, please deal with all the questions Dennis Everson poses regarding the vehicles used for transport? **Investigation is underway and ERS have been contacted. We will address directly with Mr Evanson as per his wishes.**
6. Please can you ensure that you check the records of ABC taxis and complain about the driver's behaviour, who took Shirley and Priscilla to dialysis and request a personal apology? – **requires consent from the patients**
7. Please can you ensure that you check the records of Burton taxis and complain about the driver's behaviour, who took Terry Lant to dialysis and again request a personal apology? **requires consent from the patient**
8. The behaviour of these taxi drivers (as outlined above), surely do not meet your contract guidelines. Please can you provide a copy of the said guidelines regarding drivers behaviour, which relates to the ERS Patient Transport Contract? **This information needs to be requested as an FOI and you may need to request directly from ERS**
9. What instructions are given to the Taxi driver for transporting Renal patients? **This information needs to be requested as an FOI**
10. Why are we using taxis from Burton on Trent? When they are 20 miles away and at least a 50 minute drive from Stafford. **We will speak to ERS for a response**
11. Why are ERS not using a Stafford Taxis company? **We will speak to ERS for a response**
12. Please note it takes less time to get to County Hospital, if ERS used a Stafford taxi company, than a taxi from Burton and patients would have less time to wait if this system was adopted and operated. **Comment not a question therefore no response required.**
13. We understand it cost £60/70 per taxi, per trip from the Burton company, where as a local taxi, would probably be in the range of £10 /£20 depending on where they are traveling from and to, also patients would not have to wait so long to be picked up? **This information needs to be requested as an FOI**
14. Please can you confirm how many taxis per week ERS have used from week commencing 11th April 2022 up to and including this week which is week comencing 18th June 2022? **This information needs to be requested as an FOI**
15. We understand that ERS pick up the cost of the taxis within the contract, presumably it is built into the contract cost, that they charge the Trust. Is this correct? **This information needs to be requested as an FOI**
16. Why were ABC taxis from Stoke suddenly taken on, whilst the patients were transferred for treatment at Stoke from Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> April to 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2022? **We will speak to ERS for a response**
17. What first aid training do the taxi drivers do? **This information needs to be requested as an FOI**
18. Do the taxi drivers know what to do if a Fistular starts bleeding on the way home? **This information needs to be requested as an FOI**
19. Do taxis have the proper medical pack to deal with the above situation? **This information needs to be requested as an FOI**

20. Do taxi drivers understand the seriousness of the situation of fistular bleeds and why immediate action should be taken? **This information needs to be requested as an FOI**
21. Why do patient ERS transport service constantly forget and leave patients behind? **This question is too ambiguous therefore specific times/dates and patient consent will be required before a response can be sought.**
22. What time did you instruct the taxi driver to collect Mrs Shirley Smith on 13th June 2022? **requires consent from the patient**
23. Why was the taxi driver not instructed to collect Mrs Smith at the same time as Jean Pettit went home on the above date? **requires consent from the patients**
24. Why had the taxi driver returned almost a Burton, when he received a phone call to tell him to go back to Stafford dialysis units and collect Shirley Smith, when you had informed the ambulance driver Andy, nurse Judy and secretary Sharon, that Mrs Smith taxi had been booked? **requires consent from the patient**
25. Why was Andy the ambulance man told to leave without Shirley, when she actually came out of the dialysis unit before he left the hospital, where did the communication go wrong here? **requires consent from the patient**
26. Why do ESR control constantly **not answer** the phone, this is very annoying and totally unacceptable, for patients, ambulance/taxi drivers and staff on the dialysis unit. What are you going to do to ensure that the phone service is always answers? **We will speak to ERS for a response**
27. Why is communication so bad between ESR ambulance control, your ambulance/taxi drivers and the ward staff, what can be done to improve this situation? **We will speak to ERS for a response**
28. Can you please explain to patients, why your controllers often do not put patients together, who live on the same route to the hospital? **We will speak to ERS for a response**
29. Would it be possible to speak to the ambulance controllers and help them to plan their routes? - **We will speak to ERS for a response**
30. Why did your staff in the control room, **tell blatant lies** to the three members of staff, two from dialysis and your own ambulance driver, saying that a taxi had been booked for Mrs Smith, when clearly that was not the case? **requires consent from the patient**
31. Does your contract, allow for shoddy service, if not what is going to be done about the problems which are occurring daily? **Comments will be requested**
32. Unfortunately, these are not isolated cases, what systems are you going to put in place to ensure that you do not forget patients and they are not waiting around for hours for transport? **Comments will be requested**

**A1 See below- note the complaints team will be answering part of this request**

<p>Are we right to assume that ERS have a contract with a University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust, then they subcontract it out to a taxi company, from Burton on Trent, to help provide a backup service?</p>	<p>Please be advised that this service – Non-Emergency Patient Transport (NEPTS) is commissioned by Staffordshire CCG's and not UHNM. Please see contact below.</p>
	<p>Kate Tatton Urgent Care and Senior Operations</p>

	<p>Manager   Urgent Care Team</p> <p><a href="mailto:kate.tatton@staffsstoceccgs.nhs.uk">kate.tatton@staffsstoceccgs.nhs.uk</a></p>
<p>Where can we find a copy of this contract with ERS or can you provide it?</p>	<p>Please be advised that this service – Non-Emergency Patient Transport (NEPTS) is commissioned by Staffordshire CCG's and not UHNM. Please see contact below.</p> <p>Kate Tatton Urgent Care and Senior Operations Manager   Urgent Care Team</p> <p><a href="mailto:kate.tatton@staffsstoceccgs.nhs.uk">kate.tatton@staffsstoceccgs.nhs.uk</a></p>
<p>When Renal patients are due off Dialysis the unit contacts ERS to organise an ambulance to come and pick patients up, if there are no drivers available then ERS send a taxi instead. Is this correct?</p>	<p>Complaints to respond</p>
<p>Why are dialysis patients no longer classed as "Priority Patients"?</p>	<p>Complaints to respond</p>
<p>Could you also, please deal with all the questions Dennis Everson poses regarding the vehicles used for transport?</p>	<p>Complaints to respond</p>
<p>Please can you ensure that you check the records of ABC taxis and complain about the driver's behaviour, who took Shirley and Priscilla to dialysis and request a personal apology?</p>	<p>Complaints to respond</p>
<p>Please can you ensure that you check the records of Burton taxis and complain about the driver's behaviour, who took Terry Lant to dialysis and again request a personal apology?</p>	<p>Complaints to respond</p>
<p>The behaviour of these taxi drivers (as outlined above), surely do not meet your contract guidelines. Please can you provide a copy of the said guidelines regarding drivers behaviour, which relates to the ERS Patient Transport Contract?</p>	<p>Please be advised that this service – Non-Emergency Patient Transport (NEPTS) is commissioned by Staffordshire CCG's and not UHNM. Please see contact below.</p> <p>Kate Tatton Urgent Care and Senior Operations Manager   Urgent Care Team</p> <p><a href="mailto:kate.tatton@staffsstoceccgs.nhs.uk">kate.tatton@staffsstoceccgs.nhs.uk</a></p>
<p>What instructions are given to the Taxi driver for</p>	<p>Please be advised that this service</p>

<p>transporting Renal patients?</p>	<p>– Non-Emergency Patient Transport (NEPTS) is commissioned by Staffordshire CCG's and not UHNM. Please see contact below.</p> <p>Kate Tatton Urgent Care and Senior Operations Manager   Urgent Care Team</p> <p><a href="mailto:kate.tatton@staffsstokeccgs.nhs.uk">kate.tatton@staffsstokeccgs.nhs.uk</a></p>
<p>Why are we using taxis from Burton on Trent? When they are 20 miles away and at least a 50 minute drive from Stafford.</p>	<p>Complaints to respond</p>
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<p>Please note it takes less time to get to County Hospital, if ERS used a Stafford taxi company, than a taxi from Burton and patients would have less time to wait if this system was adopted and operated.</p>	<p>Comment not a question therefore no response required.</p>
<p>We understand it cost £60/70 per taxi, per trip from the Burton company, where as a local taxi, would probably be in the range of £10 /£20 depending on where they are traveling from and to, also patients would not have to wait so long to be picked up?</p>	<p>Please be advised that this service – Non-Emergency Patient Transport (NEPTS) is commissioned by Staffordshire CCG's and not UHNM. Please see contact below.</p> <p>Kate Tatton Urgent Care and Senior Operations Manager   Urgent Care Team</p> <p><a href="mailto:kate.tatton@staffsstokeccgs.nhs.uk">kate.tatton@staffsstokeccgs.nhs.uk</a></p>
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<p>We understand that ERS pick up the cost of the taxis within the contract, presumably it is built into the</p>	<p>Please be advised that this service – Non-Emergency Patient</p>

<p>contract cost, that they charge the Trust. Is this correct?</p>	<p>Transport (NEPTS) is commissioned by Staffordshire CCG's and not UHNM. Please see contact below.</p> <p>Kate Tatton Urgent Care and Senior Operations Manager   Urgent Care Team</p> <p><a href="mailto:kate.tatton@staffsstokeccgs.nhs.uk">kate.tatton@staffsstokeccgs.nhs.uk</a></p>
<p>Why were ABC taxis from Stoke suddenly taken on, whilst the patients were transferred for treatment at Stoke from Thursday 14th April to 23rd April 2022?</p>	<p>Complaints to respond</p>
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<p>Do the taxi drivers know what to do if a Fistular starts bleeding on the way home?</p>	<p>Please be advised that this service – Non-Emergency Patient Transport (NEPTS) is commissioned by Staffordshire CCG's and not UHNM. Please see contact below.</p> <p>Kate Tatton Urgent Care and Senior Operations Manager   Urgent Care Team</p> <p><a href="mailto:kate.tatton@staffsstokeccgs.nhs.uk">kate.tatton@staffsstokeccgs.nhs.uk</a></p>
<p>Do taxis have the proper medical pack to deal with the above situation?</p>	<p>Please be advised that this service – Non-Emergency Patient Transport (NEPTS) is commissioned by Staffordshire CCG's and not UHNM. Please see contact below.</p> <p>Kate Tatton</p>

	Urgent Care and Senior Operations Manager   Urgent Care Team  <a href="mailto:kate.tatton@staffsstoceccgs.nhs.uk">kate.tatton@staffsstoceccgs.nhs.uk</a>
Do taxi drivers understand the seriousness of the situation of fistular bleeds and why immediate action should be taken?	Please be advised that this service – Non-Emergency Patient Transport (NEPTS) is commissioned by Staffordshire CCG's and not UHNM. Please see contact below.  Kate Tatton Urgent Care and Senior Operations Manager   Urgent Care Team  <a href="mailto:kate.tatton@staffsstoceccgs.nhs.uk">kate.tatton@staffsstoceccgs.nhs.uk</a>
Why do patient ERS transport service constantly forget and leave patients behind?	Complaints to respond
What time did you instruct the taxi driver to collect Mrs Shirley Smith on 13th June 2022?	Complaints to respond
Why was the taxi driver not instructed to collect Mrs Smith at the same time as Jean Pettit went home on the above date?	Complaints to respond
Why had the taxi driver returned almost a Burton, when he received a phone call to tell him to go back to Stafford dialysis units and collect Shirley Smith, when you had informed the ambulance driver Andy, nurse Judy and secretary Sharon, that Mrs Smith taxi had been booked?	Complaints to respond
Why was Andy the ambulance man told to leave without Shirley, when she actually came out of the dialysis unit before he left the hospital, where did the communication go wrong here?	Complaints to respond
Why do ESR control constantly not answer the phone, this is very annoying and totally unacceptable, for patients, ambulance/taxi drivers and staff on the dialysis unit. What are you going to do to ensure that the phone service is always answers?	Complaints to respond
Why is communication so bad between ESR ambulance control, your ambulance/taxi drivers and the ward staff, what can be done to improve this situation?	Complaints to respond
Can you please explain to patients, why your controllers often do not put patients together, who live on the same route to the hospital?	Complaints to respond
Would it be possible to speak to the ambulance controllers and help them to plan their routes? -	Complaints to respond
Why did your staff in the control room, tell blatant lies to	Complaints to respond

the three members of staff, two from dialysis and your own ambulance driver, saying that a taxi had been booked for Mrs Smith, when clearly that was not the case?	
Does your contract, allow for shoddy service, if not what is going to be done about the problems which are occurring daily?	Complaints to respond
Unfortunately, these are not isolated cases, what systems are you going to put in place to ensure that you do not forget patients and they are not waiting around for hours for transport?	Complaints to respond

\*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.***

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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](http://www.ico.org.uk).

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





University Hospitals  
of North Midlands  
NHS Trust

Yours,

Jean Lehnert  
**Data, Security & Protection Manager**