



**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 2020/21-024

Date: 29<sup>th</sup> May 2020

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

Dear

I am writing in response to your email dated 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2020 (received into our office 4<sup>th</sup> May) requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding protocol

On our acknowledgment we added the following statement:

**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 question 2 is not held centrally, but may be recorded in individual health records. In order to confirm whether this information is held we would therefore have to individually access all individual health 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 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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 What is the protocol or approach used by the Oncology Specialty in your Health Board since 01/01/2016 to prevent serious or fatal toxicity to 5-FU or capecitabine or tegafur when prescribed for a range of malignancies, particularly breast and gastrointestinal cancers?**

A1 All patients are supported with Patient Information and 24 hour access to Acute Oncology Services. Following the NHSE Specialised Services Circular September 2018 regarding risk of Toxic Epidermal Necrolysis (TEN) and Stevens Johnson Syndrome (SJS) we formalised our consent process and documentation of risk. This is also discussed at the nurse led pre-assessment and documented on our electronic prescribing system.

In January 2020 dihydropyrimidine dehydrogenase (DPD) testing for all patients requiring 5FU/capecitabine chemotherapy to identify patients more at risk of serious/life-threatening toxicity. Fluorouracil/ Capecitabine doses are adjusted or omitted accordingly if test shows DPD deficiency. As part of the consent process the patient is made aware that an absence of DPD deficiency does not exclude the risk of unpredictable life-threatening toxicity.

**Q2 How many fatalities or cases of serious toxicity have occurred in your Health Board due to this specific issue since 01/01/2016?**

A2 Section 12 and 14 exemptions as detailed above

\*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.

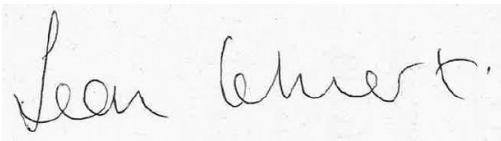
Should you have a complaint about the response or the handling of your request, please also contact my office to request a review of this. If having exhausted the Trust's FOIA complaints process you are still not satisfied, you are entitled to approach the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and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

Yours,



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