



Ref: FOIA Reference 2022/23-538

Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2023

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

Dear

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your email dated 21st December 2022 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding Dog attacks.

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 Please can you provide me with the following information for the (calendar) years:  
i) 2017 ii) 2018 iii) 2019 iv) 2020 v) 2021 vi) 2022  
\*If possible, can an age or age range be provided for each?**

**1. The number of persons who visited A&E in your NHS Trust (University Hospitals North Midlands) for injuries caused by dog bites or attacks?**

A1 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 your questions 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*

*Note; There is no way to identify people who are attacked/sustained injuries from a dog as we do not record how the injuries occurred or the reason for the attendance, we only record the actual injury/illness type that is been treated eg broken arm, laceration of arm, puncture wound to leg etc.*

*In the triage notes staff sometimes write how the injury sustained, therefore we have looked to see where the word "dog" appears. This has brought back over 8000 attendances where the word "dog" appears in the triage note, on further investigation this also brings back any word*

that contains the sequence of letters “dog” for example CLOPI**DOG**REL a blood thinning drug. Therefore this method to try to identify any patient whose injuries may have been sustained by a dog is not viable.

There is a previous FOI 235-2122 (July 2021) which has been completed which tries to identify patients who have sustained injuries from dog bites, this may be of use to you, however it is to be noted this only relates to bites and no other injuries which could be sustained by a dog.

I can confirm that the Trust holds information regarding dog bites, but feel this information is exempt under section 21: *information reasonably accessible by other means*. This is because the information is available via the Trust’s public website at the following link: FOI 235-2122 (July 2021)

<http://www.uhnm.nhs.uk/about-us/regulatory-information/freedom-of-information-publication-scheme/freedom-of-information-disclosure-log/>

**Q2 How many persons required inpatient treatment for injuries caused by dog bites or attacks?**

A2 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 your questions is not held centrally, but may be recorded in individual health records (648 records- not all patients admitted require treatment; they may just need a period of monitoring. It is to be noted not all OPCS coding relates to “treatments”, therefore to ascertain if a patient received treatment for the injuries caused by the dog someone clinical would have to manually review the notes as just because they have OPCS coding on the record does not mean they received “treatment”).

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*

*Note; There is no way to identify people who are attacked/sustained injuries from a dog as we do not record how the injuries occurred or the reason for the attendance, we only record the actual injury/illness type that is been treated eg broken arm, laceration of arm, puncture wound to leg etc.*

*In the triage notes staff sometimes write how the injury sustained, therefore we have looked to see where the word “dog” appears. This has brought back over 8000 attendances where the word “dog” appears in the triage note, on further investigation this also brings back any word that contains the sequence of letters “dog” for example CLOPI**DOG**REL a blood thinning drug. Therefore this method to try to identify any patient whose injuries may have been sustained by a dog is not viable.*

There is a previous FOI 235-2122 (July 2021) which has been completed which tries to identify patients who have sustained injuries from dog bites, this may be of use to you, however it is to be noted this only relates to bites and no other injuries which could be sustained by a dog.

I can confirm that the Trust holds information regarding dog bites, but feel this information is exempt under section 21: *information reasonably accessible by other means*. This is because the information is available via the Trust's public website at the following link: FOI 235-2122 (July 2021)

<http://www.uhnm.nhs.uk/about-us/regulatory-information/freedom-of-information-publication-scheme/freedom-of-information-disclosure-log/>

For 2022 (up to the 20th December) – there were 108 inpatients who had the ICD10 W54 - bitten/struck by a dog coding applied to their record, below is the breakdown for 2022, for the period 2017-2021 this can be found in FOI 153-2223.

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

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

| Age | 2022 | Age | 2022 |
|-----|------|-----|------|
| 0   | <5   | 45  | <5   |
| 1   | 0    | 46  | <5   |
| 2   | 0    | 47  | <5   |
| 3   | <5   | 48  | <5   |
| 4   | 7    | 49  | 0    |
| 5   | <5   | 50  | <5   |
| 6   | <5   | 51  | 0    |
| 7   | <5   | 52  | 0    |
| 8   | <5   | 53  | <5   |
| 9   | <5   | 54  | <5   |
| 10  | 0    | 55  | <5   |
| 11  | 0    | 56  | <5   |
| 12  | <5   | 57  | <5   |
| 13  | <5   | 58  | <5   |
| 14  | <5   | 59  | <5   |
| 15  | <5   | 60  | <5   |
| 16  | 0    | 61  | 0    |
| 17  | 0    | 62  | <5   |
| 18  | 0    | 63  | <5   |
| 19  | 0    | 64  | <5   |
| 20  | <5   | 65  | 0    |
| 21  | <5   | 66  | 0    |

| Age | 2022 | Age         | 2022 |
|-----|------|-------------|------|
| 22  | <5   | 67          | <5   |
| 23  | <5   | 69          | <5   |
| 24  | <5   | 70          | <5   |
| 25  | <5   | 71          | 0    |
| 26  | <5   | 72          | 0    |
| 27  | <5   | 73          | <5   |
| 28  | <5   | 74          | <5   |
| 29  | <5   | 75          | 0    |
| 30  | <5   | 76          | <5   |
| 31  | <5   | 77          | <5   |
| 32  | <5   | 78          | <5   |
| 33  | 0    | 79          | <5   |
| 34  | <5   | 80          | <5   |
| 35  | 0    | 81          | 0    |
| 36  | <5   | 82          | 0    |
| 37  | <5   | 84          | 0    |
| 38  | 0    | 86          | <5   |
| 39  | 0    | 92          | 0    |
| 40  | <5   | 93          | 0    |
| 41  | <5   | 85          | <5   |
| 42  | <5   | 88          | <5   |
| 43  | 5    | 83          | <5   |
| 44  | <5   | 97          | <5   |
|     |      | Grand Total | 108  |

**Q3 How many persons required surgery for injuries caused by dog bites or attacks?**

A3 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 your questions 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*

*Note; There is no way to identify people who are attacked/sustained injuries from a dog as we do not record how the injuries occurred or the reason for the attendance, we only record the actual injury/illness type that is been treated eg broken arm, laceration of arm, puncture wound to leg etc.*

*In the triage notes staff sometimes write how the injury sustained, therefore we have looked to see where the word “dog” appears. This has brought back over 8000 attendances where the word “dog” appears in the triage note, on further investigation this also brings back any word that contains the sequence of letters “dog” for example CLOPI**DOG**REL a blood thinning drug. Therefore this method to try to identify any patient whose injuries may have been sustained by a dog is not viable.*

*There is a previous FOI 235-2122 (July 2021) which has been completed which tries to identify patients who have sustained injuries from dog bites, this may be of use to you, however it is to be noted this only relates to bites and no other injuries which could be sustained by a dog.*

I can confirm that the Trust holds information regarding dog bites, but feel this information is exempt under section 21: *information reasonably accessible by other means*. This is because the information is available via the Trust’s public website at the following link: FOI 235-2122 (July 2021)

<http://www.uhnm.nhs.uk/about-us/regulatory-information/freedom-of-information-publication-scheme/freedom-of-information-disclosure-log/>

**Q4 How many persons suffered fatal injuries caused by dog bites or attacks?**

A4 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 your questions is not held centrally, but may be recorded in individual health/death records. In order to confirm whether this information is held we would therefore have to individually access all individual health/death 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/death 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*

*Note; There is no way to identify people who are attacked/sustained injuries from a dog as we do not record how the injuries occurred or the reason for the attendance, we only record the actual injury/illness type that is been treated eg broken arm, laceration of arm, puncture wound to leg etc.*

*In the triage notes staff sometimes write how the injury sustained, therefore we have looked to see where the word “dog” appears. This has brought back over 8000 attendances where the word “dog” appears in the triage note, on further investigation this also brings back any word that contains the sequence of letters “dog” for example CLOPI**DOG**REL a blood thinning drug. Therefore this method to try to identify any patient whose injuries may have been sustained by a dog is not viable.*

*There is a previous FOI 235-2122 (July 2021) which has been completed which tries to identify patients who have sustained injuries from dog bites, this may be of use to you, however it is to be noted this only relates to bites and no other injuries which could be sustained by a dog.*

I can confirm that the Trust holds information regarding dog bites, but feel this information is exempt under section 21: *information reasonably accessible by other means*. This is because

the information is available via the Trust's public website at the following link: FOI 235-2122 (July 2021)

<http://www.uhnm.nhs.uk/about-us/regulatory-information/freedom-of-information-publication-scheme/freedom-of-information-disclosure-log/>

We do not record on Careflow the reason why a person died; this is held on the patient's death certificate. However looking at the 648 inpatient records there were no patients discharged from hospital deceased.

\*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.***

Where the Trust owns the copyright in information provided, you may re-use the information in line with the conditions set out in the Open Government Licence v3 which is available at <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/>. Where information was created by third parties, you should contact them directly for permission to re-use the information.

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,



University Hospitals  
of North Midlands  
NHS Trust

*L Carlisle*

Leah Carlisle  
Head of Data, Security & Protection/ Data Protection Officer

