



**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 2024/25-201

Date: 31st July 2024

Email foi@uhn.nhs.uk

Dear Mr/Ms

I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your email dated 18th June 2024 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding The Prevalence of Healthcare Associated Infections (HAIs) in UK hospitals.

On the same day you sent in another request on single use medicines, we replied via email with the following:

UHNM has received several requests that are asking for similar information that we believe are from the same person/company, therefore we are contacting you to inform you that under section 12 of the FOI Act we were aggregating these requests on Use of Single-Use Medical Items and The Prevalence of Healthcare Associated Infections (HAIs) in UK hospitals.

Your new reference number for both requests is 201-2425

The section 12 exemption states:

The authority can combine related requests received within a period of 60 consecutive days from:

- The same person or
- People who appear to be acting in concert or in pursuance of a campaign.

On 20th June 2024 we contacted you via email as we required the following clarification:

Request #1

To continue with your request we require you to be specific on what organisms they require information on, there are hundreds of different organisms so your questions posed are far too broad.

On 25th June you replied via email with:

'We would like to receive information on how many total HAI cases there have been for the timeframe given. However, if this is not possible under the bounds of the FOI process then please provide figures for MRSA, C-Diff, HPV and Surgical Site Infections'

We replied with: Your 2nd request;



To continue with your request we require you to be specific on what single use items you are referring to, there are hundreds of different ones so your questions posed are far too broad.

You responded 28th June via email with:

'Thank you for your reply. To clarify we are seeking information on all single-use medical items (defined as items that are used on an individual patient and then discarded without intention to reprocess, even on the same patient). Examples might include laryngoscopes or scalpel blades.'

And

'Please disregard my last correspondence and refer to this message instead. To clarify, we are referring to single-use medical items as items that are used on an individual patient and then discarded without intention to reprocess, even on the same patient. Some examples might include laryngoscopes and surgical scalpels, as well as non-invasive medical items.'

On 16th July 2024 you emailed with the following amendments to request #2

After reviewing our original request, we recognise that it may be challenging to provide an answer some questions.

With that in mind, we would like to request information on the below questions instead - please let us know if this restarts the response process on your end or if the request is to be processed under a different reference code.

New request:

We are conducting some research on behalf of UV Smart into the use of single-use medical equipment and devices by hospitals in the UK. We are particularly interested in understanding the following from you.

In your response, please can you also confirm if we have permission to reuse the information provided for news/reporting purposes and as part of communications with industry peers and the general public. We will assume that we are able to use the information in these ways unless you explicitly advise us otherwise in your response.

1. Does ROYAL STOKE UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL use single-use medical equipment/devices?

- a. Yes***
- b. No***

2. If yes to question 1, does ROYAL STOKE UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL use single-use medical equipment/devices where there are reusable alternatives available?

3. Does ROYAL STOKE UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL plan to reduce its reliance on single-use medical equipment/devices?

- a. Yes***
- b. No***
- c. Don't know***

4. Has ROYAL STOKE UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL introduced any new solutions or put in place any targets for reducing the use of single-use medical equipment/devices?

Our response

However as UHNM had already collated the information for this request (see below) we don't feel there is any value in us re-submitting for completion

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 We are conducting some research on behalf of [REDACTED] into rates of healthcare-associated infections (HAIs) across hospitals in the UK. We are particularly interested in understanding the following from you.

In your response, please can you also confirm if we have permission to reuse the information provided for news/reporting purposes and as part of communications with industry peers and the general public. We will assume that we are able to use the information in these ways unless you explicitly advise us otherwise in your response.

1. How many Healthcare-Associated Infections (HAIs) have been recorded at Royal Stoke University Hospital over the past three years?

- 2022
- 2023
- 2024 (to May 31)

A1 Trust data relating to all Mandatory surveillance organisms is already in the public domain along with other organisms of interest – E.g. UKHSA reports, Trust Board papers, Infection Prevention Annual Report- this information is exempt under section 21: *information reasonably accessible by other means*; refer to the following link: <https://www.uhnm.nhs.uk/about-us/our-board/>

Q2 What are the most common types of HAIs reported in Royal Stoke University Hospital (i.e., surgical site infections, MRSA, HPV etc.)?

A2 CDiff and MRSA data is already in the public domain as per Question 1

SSI's = 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 this question is not held centrally, but may be recorded in health records. In order to confirm whether this information is held we would therefore have to individually access all 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 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

HPV – question needs asking of Sexual Health Services- Not held by UHNM

- Q3 Please provide data on the mortality rate associated with HAIs in Royal Stoke University Hospital over the past three years?**
- 2022
 - 2023
 - 2024 (to May 31)

A3 Information not held

- Q4 On average, do patients who contract HAIs spend more, less or the same length of time in hospital compared to those who don't?**
- More time
 - Less time
 - The same amount of time

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

- Q5 How much has the treatment of HAIs cost Royal Stoke University Hospital over the past three years?**
- 2022
 - 2023
 - 2024 (to May 31)

A5 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 this question is not held centrally, but may be recorded in health records. In order to confirm whether this information is held we would therefore have to individually access all 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 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*

- Q6 What infection control policies and procedures are currently in place to prevent HAIs?**

A6 See attached

- Q7 How often are these policies and procedures reviewed and updated at Royal Stoke University Hospital (please provide dates of the last review/update period)?**
- A7 The IP Policy is a dynamic document and is constantly under review and updated accordingly
- Q8 Are there any specific protocols in place to deal with an outbreak of HAIs at Royal Stoke University Hospital?**
- A8 The Infection Prevention Q&A Policy part B covers all aspects of outbreak management
- Q9 How is staff hygiene maintained to reduce the risk of HAIs?**
- A9 Observational, independent unannounced audits are carried out by the Infection Prevention Team
- Q10 How is visitor hygiene maintained to reduce the risk of HAIs?**
- A10 Signage and information leaflets are available for ward staff to share with patients and their visitors
- Q11 How is patient hygiene maintained to reduce the risk of HAIs?**
- A11 As per question 10 plus ward staff encourage patients to practice good hand hygiene especially at meal times
- Q12 Are there specific cleaning and disinfection procedures for patient rooms, medical equipment, and common areas?**
- A12 Routine use of sporicidal cleaning agents
- Q13 Have any new technologies or practices have been implemented to reduce the rates of HAIs at Royal Stoke University Hospital over the past three years?**
- A13 Hydrogen peroxide is used when deemed necessary
- Q14 Are there any plans to explore or introduce new technologies or practices at Royal Stoke University Hospital to reduce the rates of HAIs over the next three years**
- A14 Cleaning technologies and practices are always under consideration

Request #2 (201-2425)

- Q1 We are conducting some research on behalf of [REDACTED] into the use of single-use medical equipment by hospitals in the UK. We are particularly interested in understanding the following from you.**

In your response, please can you also confirm if we have permission to reuse the information provided for news/reporting purposes and as part of communications with industry peers and the general public. We will assume that we are able to use the information in these ways unless you explicitly advise us otherwise in your response.

1. How many single-use medical items has Royal Stoke University Hospital used, and subsequently thrown away, over the past three years?

- 2022
- 2023
- 2024 (to May 31)

A1 Information not held as this question is too broad

Q2 How does this compare to 2014? Please provide specific figures for this year (where figures are not available, please provide percentages)?

A2 Information not held

Q3 What is the primary reason/reasons for using single-use medical items rather than reusable equivalents (mark as appropriate)?

- Cost savings
- Time Savings
- Patient Safety/Infection Control
- Other (please specify)

A3 Patient Safety/Infection Control

Q4 Can you provide any examples of departments in Royal Stoke University Hospital that are particularly reliant on single-use medical items?

A4 Information not held

Q5 What is the disposal process for single-use medical items at Royal Stoke University Hospital and what is typically done with single-use medical items after they are used?

- Sent to landfill
- Sent to a recycling centre
- Incinerated/destroyed
- Other (please specify)

A5 See below:

Sent to a recycling centre
Incinerated/destroyed

The disposal method is reliant on the single use item.

Q6 How much has the disposal of single-use medical items cost Royal Stoke University Hospital over the past three years?

- 2022
- 2023
- 2024 (to May 31)

A6 There is no separate waste stream for single use items.

Q7 Does Royal Stoke University Hospital plan to reduce its reliance on single-use medical items?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

A7 Don't know

Q8 Does Royal Stoke University Hospital have any specific action points, strategies or benchmarks for reducing the use of single-use medical items over the next three years

A8 Information not held

*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.

Yours,



University Hospitals
of North Midlands
NHS Trust

Rachel Montinaro
Data Security and Protection Manager - Records

