



Ref: FOIA Reference 2020/21-061

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

Date: 3rd June 2020

Email foi@uhnm.nhs.uk

Dear

I am writing in response to your email dated 26th May 2020 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding fat shaming

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.

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 Could you please tell me for the calendar year 2019?

1) How many complaints through the patient advice and liaison system (PALS) your Trust received from patients alleging they had been discriminated against or badly treated by a member of staff because of their being overweight or obese

Please do this by searching for complaints containing any of the words "weight", "fat", "obese", "overweight" and "bariatric" and filtering these to find those that refer to fat-shaming comments made by a member of staff.

A1 The patient advice and liaison system (PALS) received three (3) complaints, using the search containing any of the words "weight", "fat", "obese", "overweight" and "bariatric" and these were filtered these to find those that refer to fat-shaming comments made by a member of staff.

Q2 Can you select the first five such complaints from 2019 and provide me with the following details:

- a. What type of staff member was the complaint levelled against? E.g. healthcare assistant, junior doctor, consultant, cleaner, kitchen staff**
- b. Please quote the words allegedly used by the hospital staff or summarise the offending action**
- c. Please tell me what, if any, action was taken by your trust in response to these five sample complaints from the beginning of 2018**

A2 Please see below:

- 1) a) Consultant
- 1) b) Patient asked what kind of pain relief was needed- Consultant responded “a dietician”
- 1) c) Apology provided

- 2) a) Nurse
- 2) b) Patient was asked how pregnant was but she wasn’t pregnant
- 2) c) Apology for the mistake- nurse was trying to make conversation

- 3) a) Consultant
- 3) b) Patient was in agony and was told to get used to the pain, exercise and lose weight
- 3) c) Consultant advised that clinical management advice has been provided

*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.

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