

Ref: FOIA Reference 2020/21-071

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

Date: 17th July 2020

Email foi@uhnm.nhs.uk

Dear

I am writing in response to your email dated 1st June 2020 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) regarding fit testing

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 your questions is not held centrally, but may be recorded in individual staff/health records. In order to confirm whether this information is held we would therefore have to individually access all individual staff/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 staff/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 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 Please find below my FOI related to fit-testing of respiratory protective equipment.

How many medical staff were working with tight-fitting respiratory protective equipment in February 2020, March 2020, April 2020 and May 2020?

Please give the numbers broken down by the months; and, if it is possible, please break it down by type of staff member (nurse, doctor, etc.) and setting.

If it is possible, please separate out those working in Covid-affected environments (I do not know if you hold a separate register for Covid and non-Covid).

A1 Section 12 and 14 exemptions as detailed above

Q2 How many of the medical staff working with tight-fitting respiratory protective equipment in Covid-affected environments were fit-tested for that equipment in February 2020, March 2020, April 2020 and May 2020?

Please give the numbers broken down by the months; and, if it is possible, please break it down by type of staff member (nurse, doctor, etc.) and setting. Again, if it is possible, please separate out those working in Covid-affected environments.

If the data is sensitive enough to show where the same staff were fit-tested multiple times, please include that information.

A2 As answer 1

Q3 Do you collect data on medical staff working with tight-fitting respiratory protective equipment being fit-tested when they change brand/type of RPE?

If so, please give the figures for Feb, March, April and May 2020 as above.

A3 As answer 1

Q4 Do you track the ethnicity of the staff member with this data?

If so, please give the ethnicity breakdowns for the above data for all questions.

A4 As answer 1

*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.

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