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Request for Information Reference: 02.23.48

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Email only

14th March 2023

Dear

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request for Information

Thank you for submitting a request for information which we received on 20th February 2023 in relation to County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust (the Trust). Your request has been processed under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and I am now able to provide you with a response.

Your request was in relation to Meningitis and Encephalitis Guidelines/Pathway and I am providing the following information in response to your specific questions:

Questions for clinical team(s):

1. Of the following, which guidelines does your Trust follow for the diagnosis and treatment of meningitis/encephalitis: (Please answer: Yes/No)

- **NICE Guidelines (CG102) - Bacterial meningitis in under 16s: recognition, diagnosis and management**

Yes

- **UK Joint Specialist Societies guideline on the diagnosis and management of acute meningitis and meningococcal sepsis in immunocompetent adults (published 2016)**

Yes

- **Association of British Neurologists and British Infection Association National Guidelines – Management of suspected viral encephalitis in adults (published 2011)**

Yes

- **Association of British Neurologists and British Paediatric Allergy, Immunology and Infection Group National Guidelines – Management of suspected viral encephalitis in children (published 2011)**

Yes

2. **Does your Trust have any locally developed/adapted guidelines for the diagnosis and treatment of meningitis/encephalitis in both adults and paediatric patients?**

No, National Guidance is used

If yes, please state which guidelines have been adapted and please provide a copy of your local guidelines.

Not applicable

3. **What are the top 3 roles in your Trust, in order of involvement, that are responsible for the development of local pathways and guidelines for meningitis/encephalitis?**

The Trust access partner in paediatrics guidelines (The Trust is a member of this)

4. **Does your Trust typically take samples of blood cultures from patients with suspected meningitis/encephalitis within: (Please select answer)**

- **1 hour of admission?** - Yes
- **2-4 hours of admission?**
- **4-8 hours of admission?**
- **8> hours of admission?**

5. **Does your Trust consistently carry out lumbar punctures in patients with no contradictions who have suspected meningitis/encephalitis? (Yes/No)**

Yes

If yes, who performs the lumbar puncture? (Please specify job role)

Doctors who are specially trained.

6. Does your Trust consistently take cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) samples via lumbar puncture from patients with suspected meningitis/encephalitis within: (Please select answer)

- 1 hour of admission?
- 1-2 hours of admission? - Yes
- 2-4 hours of admission?
- 4-8 hours of admission?
- 8-12 hours of admission?
- >12 hours of admission?

7. Does your Trust administer antibiotics to patients where appropriate prior to taking blood culture and CSF samples? (Yes/No)

Yes

8. Does your Trust consistently administer antibiotics to patients with suspected meningitis/encephalitis within: (Please select answer)

- 1 hours of admission? - Yes
- 2-4 hours of admission?
- 4-8 hours of admission?
- 8> hours of admission?

Questions for lab team(s):

9. Which of the following guidelines does your Trust follow for the microbiological investigation of meningitis/encephalitis: (Please select: Yes/No)

- UK Standards for Microbiology Investigations – Meningoencephalitis (published 2014)

Yes

- UK Standards for Microbiology Investigations – Investigation of Cerebrospinal Fluid (published 2017)

Yes

10. Does your Trust have any local adaptations or amendments to the two UK Standards for Microbiology Investigations listed in the above question? If yes, please provide a copy of your local amendments.

No

11. Following lumbar puncture on a patient with suspected meningitis/encephalitis, how long are the turnaround times from point of receiving specimen to result on the following tests: (Please select answer for each result)

Please note that answers are based on receipt of samples into the microbiology lab at University Hospital North Durham – they do not include transport time.

a) Cell count (<1 hour, 1-2 hours, 2-4 hours or >4 hours)

1-2 Hours

b) Gram staining (<1 hour, 1-2 hours, 2-4 hours or >4 hours)

1-2 Hours

c) Bacterial culture (<1 hour, 1-2 hours, 2-4 hours or >4 hours)

Cultured within 1-2 hours, results in > 4 hours

d) PCR (<1 hour, 1-2 hours, 2-4 hours or >4 hours)

< 4 hours (referral test)

12. Where does your Trust process CSF samples?

Microbiology Department at University Hospital North Durham

13. Does your Trust perform PCR testing to test samples from patients with suspected meningitis/encephalitis? (Yes/No)

No

14. If PCR testing is carried out in your Trust, which bacterial and viral pathogens are tested for? (Please separate your answer by bacterial and viral pathogens)

Not Applicable

In line with the Information Commissioner's directive on the disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 your request will form part of our disclosure log on the Trust's website. However please be assured that we anonymise all responses prior to adding them to the disclosure log.

I hope that this response has provided you with the information you had requested. If you have any queries or wish to discuss the information supplied, please do not hesitate to contact me by telephone or in writing. If however, you are dissatisfied with

the way in which your request has been handled and would like an internal review, you will need to contact me in writing at the above address or via cdda-tr.cddffoi@nhs.

If you remain dissatisfied with our response following an internal review you have the right to appeal to The Information Commissioner at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. More information is available on their website; www.ico.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely

Corporate Records and Freedom of Information Facilitator