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Request for Information Reference: 04.24.41

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Email only

7th May 2024

Dear

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request for Information

Thank you for submitting a request for information which we received on 12th April 2024 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 Planned Care and Follow-up Appointments and I am providing the following information in response to your specific questions:

- 1a. **Does your organisation follow the guidance set out in Section 5 (Recording RTT waiting times: Planned patients) of NHS England's ['Recording and reporting referral to treatment \(RTT\) waiting times for consultant led elective care'](#)?:** *“Planned care means an appointment /procedure or series of appointments/ procedures as part of an agreed programme of care which is required for clinical reasons to be carried out at a specific time or repeated at a specific frequency. Planned activity is also sometimes called ‘surveillance’, ‘re-do’ or ‘follow-up’.” ... “When patients on planned lists are clinically ready for their care to commence and reach the date for their planned appointment, they should either receive that appointment or be transferred to an active waiting list and a waiting time clock should start (and be reported in the relevant waiting time return). The key principle is that where patients' treatment can be started immediately, then they should start treatment or be added to an active waiting list.”*

Yes

1b. If so, do you follow the guidance with respect to the following types of planned patient (as defined in the guidance):

- Follow-up outpatients
- Cancer surveillance patients
- Active monitoring patients

Yes

1c. If so, at what point does your organisation place patients waiting for planned care (as defined in the guidance) on an active RTT waiting list? (e.g. the RTT clock starts as soon as a patient's care becomes 'overdue', or after a defined time period or tolerance following a patient's care becoming 'overdue'?)

Within 6 weeks of expected due date

1d. If such patients are placed on an active RTT waiting list, do you report them on i) the Referral to Treatment statistics to NHS England which are published monthly as National Statistics, and/or ii) the Waiting List Minimum Data Set (WLMDS)?

Yes if treatment periods are restarted following periods of active monitoring where the patient is now clinically ready to proceed

2a. How many patients on your active RTT waiting list have been placed on this waiting list having been transferred from a planned care list (as defined in the guidance)? Please provide the most recent available figures and state the date of those figures.

2b. How long have these patients been on an active RTT waiting list?

- i. 0-4 weeks (0-28 days)
- ii. >4 -12 weeks (29-84 days)
- iii. >12-18 weeks (85 days-126 days)
- iv. >18-36 weeks (127 days-252 days)
- v. >36-52 weeks (253 days-364 days)
- vi. >52-104 weeks (365 days – 728 days)
- vii. >104 weeks (729 days or more)
- viii. No date recorded.

2c. How many of these patients are on an active RTT waiting list for the following RTT treatment functions?

- i) General Surgery Service
- ii) Urology Service
- iii) Trauma and Orthopaedic Service
- iv) Ear Nose and Throat Service
- v) Ophthalmology Service
- vi) Oral Surgery Service
- vii) Neurosurgical Service

- viii) Plastic Surgery Service
- ix) Cardiothoracic Surgery Service
- x) General Internal Medicine Service
- xi) Gastroenterology Service
- xii) Cardiology Service
- xiii) Dermatology Service
- xiv) Respiratory Medicine Service
- xv) Neurology Service
- xvi) Rheumatology Service
- xvii) Elderly Medicine Service
- xviii) Gynaecology Service
- xix) Other - Medical Services
- xx) Other - Mental Health Services
- xxi) Other - Paediatric Services
- xxii) Other - Surgical Services
- xxiii) Other - Other Services
- xxiv) Unknown

The Trust does not centrally record this information and estimates that it would take a significant amount of time to gather the information requested. In order to gather this information it would require a member of staff to manually examine patient notes. Therefore, we are refusing this section of your request for information pursuant to section 12 of the Act on the grounds that we estimate that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit. The appropriate limit at the present time is £450.00 which equates to eighteen hours of work by a member of staff at the rate of £25 per hour.

3. How many planned patients (as defined in the guidance), in each of the following categories, do not have a date that allows their overdue date to be calculated (e.g. a due-by / latest clinically appropriate date):

- Follow-up outpatients
- Cancer surveillance patients
- Active monitoring patients

Zero

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.cddftfoi@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