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Request for Information Reference: 02.18.53

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Email only

19 March 2018

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request for Information

Thank you for your request for information received on 28 February 2018 in relation to the County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust (Trust). We are dealing with your request under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

You requested information regarding caesarean section by maternal request. Specifically you asked:

1. Does the Trust allow women to have caesarean sections (C/S) by maternal request (i.e. when a woman asks for a caesarean section when there is no other indication)?

Answer: Yes the Trust does allow some women to undergo elective C/S by maternal request. Please see below (copied from the Trust policy, the full policy is attached)

Maternal request for caesarean section

- Except in exceptional circumstances maternal request is not an indication for elective CS
- Explore and record reasons for request
- Offer referral to prenatal mental health professional for support if anxiety about childbirth
- An Obstetrician unwilling to perform CS should refer the woman to an Obstetrician who will carry out CS
- Include a discussion with other members of the obstetric team (including the obstetrician, midwife and anaesthetist) if necessary to explore the reasons for the

request, and to ensure the woman has accurate information. It may be appropriate to consider referral to a Supervisor of Midwives for the woman to discuss her request.

- If after full discussion, (including; what the procedure involves, associated risks and benefits, implications for future pregnancies and birth after CS) and offer of support vaginal birth is not an acceptable option offer a planned caesarean section.
(This information is on page 6 of policy.)

Only if you answer “No” to Q1:

2. If possible, please state when this restriction was introduced (or state if it has always been Trust policy)?

Answer: Please see above.

3. A) Please provide the relevant policy and/or guideline which sets out the Trust's position on caesarean sections by maternal request? Please attach the document(s) or provide a direct link(s), stating page number if applicable?

Answer: Please see policy attached.

B) If applicable, please provide the patient information leaflet provided to women who ask for a maternal request caesarean section? Please attach the document or provide a direct link?

Answer: The Trust has no specific patient leaflet for maternal request C/S.

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. Therefore, a version of our response which will protect your anonymity will be posted on the County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust website.

If you have any queries or wish to discuss the information supplied, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above telephone number or at the above address.

If you are unhappy with the way your request for information has been handled, you can request a review by writing to:

The Chief Executive
County Durham & Darlington NHS Foundation Trust
Darlington Memorial Hospital
Hollyhurst Road
Darlington
DL3 6HX

If, you remain dissatisfied with the handling of your request or complaint, you have a right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113
Website: www.ico.gov.uk.

There is no charge for making an appeal.

Yours sincerely

Joanna Tyrrell
Freedom of Information Officer