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Request for Information Reference: 07.18.48

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Email only

20 August 2018

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request for Information

Thank you for your request for information received on 30 July 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 preventing infections. Specifically you asked for:

Under the Freedom of Information Act, please could you provide answers to the following:

1. As a Trust, what protocols do you have in place for managing patients to prevent infection in the patient pathway?

Answer: The Trust has a number of Policies in relation to preventing, reducing and controlling infection; these are in line with the requirements of the Health and Social Care Act (2008) Code of practice on the prevention and control of infections and related guidance. These cover;

- Standard infection and Control Precautions
- Aseptic Technique
- Outbreaks of Communicable disease
- Isolation of service users with an Infection
- Safe handling and disposal of sharps
- Prevention of occupational health exposure to Blood Borne Viruses (BBV's) including prevention of sharps injuries.
- Management of occupational exposures to BBV's and post exposure prophylaxis
- Decontamination of medical devices.
- Antimicrobial prescribing
- Reporting of infections to PHE or local authority
- Control of outbreaks and infections associated with specific alert organisms
- CJDvVCJD

- Safe handling and disposal of waste
- Uniform and dress code policy

2. Do you have a policy for routine testing for bacterial infections a) in all patients b) in high risk patients only?

Answer: The Trust has a policy to routinely screen emergency and elective patient admissions for MRSA. MRSA screening of elective and emergency admissions to CDDFT was implemented in line with national guidance from January 2009. The following groups were excluded as part of the elective screening:

- Day case ophthalmology
- Day case dental
- Day case endoscopy
- Minor dermatology procedures e.g. warts or other liquid nitrogen applications
- Children/paediatrics unless already in a high risk group
- Maternity/obstetrics except for elective Caesareans and any cases with high risk of complications in the mother and/or potential complications in the baby (e.g. likely to need SCBU/NICU because of size or known complications or risk factors).
- Patients attending RAMAC
- ED short stay
- Patients admitted on end of life pathway
- Individual minor procedures such as arthroscopies, lumbar puncture, joint injections or minor hand surgery such as carpal tunnel decompression
- Patients who are not receiving any medical or surgical treatment – e.g. those in respite care, or day cases attending for pain management therapy, and attendances for clinical immunology
- Terminations of pregnancies
- Radiological patients
- Dermatology, Patients attending the rapid access clinic and Patients attending for same day procedures
- Cardiology, Stress echo, TOE
- Pain procedures, Trigger point, Facet joint injections, Epidurals, All nerve block. Sacral iliac joint injections
- Patients admitted to;
 - acute medical units
 - surgical admission units
 - clinical decision unit
 - maternity unit,

for investigation/assessment but whose length of stay is less than 12 hours.

3. Do you have a policy for routine testing for viral infections

a) in all patients

b) in high risk patients only?

Answer: The Trust does not do routine testing for viral infections.

Testing for viral infections is performed when relevant clinical signs or symptoms are present and when there is seasonal increase in prevalence of certain viral infections for e.g. Flu, RSV

4. Is isolation the protocol for high risk patients? If not, please can you confirm what protocols are in place.

Answer: Isolation is one of the Infection control measures used to minimise the risk of transmission of infection for patients with known or suspected infections

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