

Request for Information Reference: 03.19.26

Direct line: 01325 743700

Email: [cdda-tr.cddffoi@nhs.net](mailto:cdda-tr.cddffoi@nhs.net)

Email only

8 April 2019

## **Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request for Information**

Thank you for your request for information received on 15 March 2019 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 physical and non-physical assaults. Specifically you requested information as follows:

***This is a follow-up to the data previously released to and published by Unison and the Health Service Journal for the year 2016-2017, so please release the data I am requesting with the same parameters used in this previous data for the year 2017-2018.***

***The questions below are in order of importance; if answering these questions is likely to exceed the cost and time limit for responding to an FOI please answer them in order until these limits have been met. I would like to request the following:***

**1. The total number of physical assaults on staff for the following time periods:**

- **2017-2018**
- **2018-2019, or up until the most recent month available**

***By physical assaults on staff I refer to the definition used in the NHS Protect 2016 Guidance: “the intentional application of force against the person without lawful justification resulting in physical injury or personal discomfort. Spitting is included in the definition of a physical assault.”***

**2. If available, please also release the relevant data sets for these time periods.**

**The total number of non-physical assaults on staff for the following time periods:**

- **2017-2018**
- **2018-2019, or up until the most recent month available**

***By non-physical assaults on staff I refer to the definition used in the NHS Protect 2016 Guidance: “the use of inappropriate words or behaviour causing distress and/or constituting harassment. Non-physical assault includes: offensive or obscene language; verbal abuse and swearing; brandishing weapons, or objects which could be used as weapons; attempted assaults; offensive gestures; threats; intimidation; harassment or stalking; damage to buildings equipment or vehicles which causes fear for personal safety; offensive language or behaviour related to a person’s, race, gender, nationality, religion, disability, age or sexual orientation; inappropriate sexual language or behaviour.”***

***If available, please also release the relevant data sets for these time periods.***

***If possible, could you please release answers to each question as soon as possible (rather than in one overall response). If FOI requests of a similar nature have already been asked could you please include your responses to those requests. If any of this information is already in the public domain, please can you direct me to it, with page references and URLs if necessary.***

**County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust replies:**

***1. The total number of physical assaults on staff for the following time periods:***

- 2017-2018***
- 2018-2019, or up until the most recent month available***

By physical assaults on staff I refer to the definition used in the NHS Protect 2016 Guidance: “the intentional application of force against the person without lawful justification resulting in physical injury or personal discomfort. Spitting is included in the definition of a physical assault.”

If available, please also release the relevant data sets for these time periods.

**Trust Response:**

The Trust’s incident reporting system does not record whether incidents were ‘intentional’ or ‘unintentional’ and as such all such incidents are deemed physical / non-physical assaults.

	<b>Physical Assaults</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>2017/18</b>	162	Total number of reported incidents
	125	Excludes those caused by confused patients
	91	Excludes confused patients and no harm incidents
<b>2018/19 (End Feb)</b>	229	Total number of reported incidents
	167	Excludes those caused by confused patients
	37	Excludes confused patients and no harm incidents

**2. The total number of non-physical assaults on staff for the following time periods:**

- **2017-2018**
- **2018-2019, or up until the most recent month available**

By non-physical assaults on staff I refer to the definition used in the NHS Protect 2016 Guidance: “the use of inappropriate words or behaviour causing distress and/or constituting harassment. Non-physical assault includes: offensive or obscene language; verbal abuse and swearing; brandishing weapons, or objects which could be used as weapons; attempted assaults; offensive gestures; threats; intimidation; harassment or stalking; damage to buildings equipment or vehicles which causes fear for personal safety; offensive language or behaviour related to a person’s, race, gender, nationality, religion, disability, age or sexual orientation; inappropriate sexual language or behaviour.”

	<b>Non-Physical Incidents</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>2017/18</b>	258	Total number of reported incidents
	44	Excludes no harm incidents
<b>2018/19 (End Feb)</b>	289	Total number of reported incidents
	15	Excludes no harm incidents

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

*Synchronicity Care Limited*

Registered Address: Darlington Memorial Hospital, Hollyhurst Road, Darlington, DL3 6HX

Registered Company Number: 9679630 (July 2015)

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](http://www.ico.gov.uk).

There is no charge for making an appeal.

Yours sincerely

**Joanna Tyrrell**  
**Freedom of Information Officer**

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