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Request for Information Reference: 03.19.31

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Email only

17 April 2019

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request for Information

Thank you for your request for information received on 20 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 the wheelchair services. Specifically you requested information as follows:

I am interested in the budget and spend by the NHS on powered wheelchairs and the maintenance of powered wheelchairs.

1. Your Wheelchair service provider

a. Is the provider an NHS organisation or a non-NHS organisation?

Answer: NHS - CDDFT Wheelchair service

b. If it's a non-NHS organisation what is its name?

Answer: Approved repairer is NHS - Ross Care

2. About Wheelchair service Users

a. How many registered wheelchair users are there at your wheelchair service as of January 2019?

Answer: There are 9,000 service users on the wheelchair electronic system.

b. Of the current registered users, how many users currently have a powered wheelchair?

Answer: 354.

c. How many registered users received powered wheelchairs in the 2017/2018 financial year?

Answer: The Trust does not record this data in a format that could easily provide the information requested. To manually analyse records to identify an accurate number would, in the Trust's estimation, take over the permitted timescale within the act. 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.

i. How many registered users were assessed for powered wheelchairs in the 2017/2018 financial year?

Answer: The Trust does not record this data in a format that could easily provide the information requested. To manually analyse records to identify an accurate number would, in the Trust's estimation, take over the permitted timescale within the act. 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.

d. Of the current registered users, how many powered wheelchairs received maintenance or repairs in the 2017/2018 financial year?

Answer: The Trust can provide the data for the number of repairs from 01 June 2017 to 31 March 2018. That is when we took over the contract.

North Durham:	587
South Durham:	703
Total:	1,290

A monthly average to provide you the missing two months of the Financial Year is provided below:

North Durham Monthly Average:	56
South Durham Monthly Average:	69

Using this average, estimated volumes for the 12 month period would be:

North Durham:	699
South Durham:	841

3. About your Wheelchair service

- a. What was the total budget for your wheelchair services for the 2017/2018 financial year?**

Answer: £900,140 (includes pay and non-pay).

- b. What was the budget for powered wheelchairs for the 2017/2018 financial year, excluding maintenance?**

Answer: Powered wheelchairs are not separately budgeted for, nor identified as a sub-set of the main budget, hence we do not hold this information.

- c. How much money was spent on powered wheelchairs in the 2017/2018 financial year, excluding maintenance? In 2016/2017?**

Answer: We do not hold this information. We are unable to identify between powered and non-powered (transactional detail within our systems does not allow for this level of analysis).

- d. What was your budget for maintenance and repairs on powered wheelchairs for the 2017/2018 financial year?**

Answer: We do not hold this information. We are unable to identify between powered and non-powered (transactional detail within our systems does not allow for this level of analysis).

- e. How much money was spent on maintenance and repairs of powered wheelchairs in 2017/2018 financial year? In 2016/2017?**

Answer: We do not hold this information. We are unable to identify between powered and non-powered (transactional detail within our systems does not allow for this level of analysis).

- f. What kind of discount do your contracted suppliers give you on powered wheelchairs? On maintenance and repairs?**

Answer: The Trust joined the contract once the contract had already been agreed, the Trust was not therefore involved with agreeing the specific details of the contract and we do not hold copies of the information requested. Regional Rehabilitation Engineering and Mobility Service (RREMS) should be the first point of contact for this information. If you wish to contact them in accordance with Section 16 of the Act (duty to provide advice and assistance) you can contact them via the following telephone number, email address or link:

Telephone: 0191 213 8105

Email: simon.richardson@nuth.nhs.uk.

Link: http://www.newcastle-hospitals.org.uk/services/medical-physics_services_rehabilitation-engineering-and-aids-to-living.aspx

4. About the Equipment Provided by your wheelchair service

a. What is the average cost of the powered wheelchairs you provided in the 2017/2018 financial year?

Answer: We do not hold this information. We are unable to identify between powered and non-powered (transactional detail within our systems does not allow for this level of analysis).

b. What is the average cost of the maintaining the powered wheelchairs you provide per chair per year in the 2017/2018 financial year?

Answer: We do not hold this information. We are unable to identify between powered and non-powered (transactional detail within our systems does not allow for this level of analysis).

c. Does your wheelchair service provide powered wheelchair vouchers?

Answer: No. Liaison with CCG is ongoing relating to personal wheelchair budget

i. If so, what percentage of powered wheelchair users opted for a wheelchair voucher or took a personal wheelchair budget rather than an NHS wheelchair in 2017/2018?

Answer: N/A.

ii. What is the average voucher amount your wheelchair service gave towards powered wheelchairs in the 2017/2018 financial year?

Answer: N/A.

d. What is the average amount your wheelchair service allocated to maintenance and repairs on powered wheelchair vouchers in the 2017/2018 financial year?

Answer: N/A

i. How was this amount formulated?

Answer: N/A

5. About the Introduction of Personal Wheelchair Budgets

a. Does your wheelchair service now provide personal wheelchair budgets (PWB)?

Answer: No.

b. How will your service calculate the PWB amount for powered wheelchair users in the 2018/2019 financial year?

Answer: The Trust is awaiting direction/ instructions from commissioners with respect to this issue.

i. What will the average amount allocated to maintenance and repairs be for powered wheelchairs?

Answer: Transactional data does not allow for a financial breakdown with regards to an average amount allocated to maintenance and repairs for powered wheelchairs.

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