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Request for Information Reference: 07.19.31

Direct line: 01325 743700
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Email only

14 August 2019

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request for Information

Thank you for your request for information received on 17 July 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 overseas patients. Specifically you requested information as follows:

I am requesting the following information under the Freedom of Information Act:

1. Whether the Trust has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Home Office regarding the Immigration Enforcement Checking and Advisory Service (IECAS) helpline. If so, please provide a copy of that MoU

Answer: We do have a MOU in place. However, the Home Office is the creator of this document and its marked Official Sensitive. We would refer you to the Home Office to request a copy of the MOU.

2. For each financial year since 2017/18 and including 2019/20, the number of patients whose information and/or data was shared with the Home Office without the patient's knowledge or permission, and the basis for this information sharing. Please state the categories of information that were disclosed (e.g. country of origin)

Answer: The Trust adhere to Chapter 12 of the Overseas charging regulations in regards to sharing patient information with the Home Office. Therefore, I would refer you to the Charging regulations for further information.

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attach>

[ment_data/file/767905/guidance-on-implementing-the-overseas-visitor-charging-regulations.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/767905/guidance-on-implementing-the-overseas-visitor-charging-regulations.pdf))

3. Staff training slides (or Word documents, pdfs) used in any training/guidance sessions, related to patient charging, delivered by Overseas Visitor Managers to Trust staff since July 2017.

Answer: Staff and OVM training is found online (e- learning) through the department of health via Health Education England

4. Copies of the training material used to train Overseas Visitor Managers in relation to identifying patients ineligible for free NHS care

Answer: Staff and OVM training is found online (e- learning) through the department of health via Health Education England. OVMs also have access to the DHSC forum that provides support, legislation updates and everyday resources and tools. (Patients letters and leaflets etc.)

5. Any checklist, guidance, policies or procedures currently used by Overseas Visitor Managers to identify patients who may be ineligible for free NHS care under the overseas patient charging rules

Answer: We adhere to the guidance on implementing the overseas visitor charging regulations to assist us in identifying patients who may be chargeable.
(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/767905/guidance-on-implementing-the-overseas-visitor-charging-regulations.pdf)

6. Does the Trust record the ethnicity or nationality of patients who are asked to provide evidence/proof of their eligibility for free NHS care? If so, please provide this data for 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 (year to date)

Answer: No. Once an evidence request is complete and verified the Trust patient administration system is updated to show the patients chargeable category only

7. Please list the circumstances under which, under current Trust/DHSC policy, the Trust shares the home address of past or current patients with the Home Office

Answer: Any request for patient information would be referred to the Data Protection Office/Information Governance to make the decision on if the release of patient information complied with GDPR.



County Durham
and Darlington

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8. Have any Trust staff faced disciplinary procedures for not cooperating with the identification or charging of patients ineligible for free NHS care since October 2017?

Answer: No

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



County Durham
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NHS Foundation Trust

Joanna Tyrrell
Freedom of Information Officer