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Darlington Memorial Hospital
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Darlington
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Foundation Trust Office: 01325 74 3625
Corporate Records Office: 01325 74 3700

Request for Information Reference: 02.20.03

Direct line: 01325 743700
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Email only

25 February 2020

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request for Information

Thank you for your request for information received on 3 February 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 elective pathways. Specifically you requested information as follows:

I am writing to request access to some information under the Freedom of Information Act.

- ***I would like to request any policy or document that describes your trust's current approach for offering choice to patients who have been on an elective pathway for over 26 weeks.***
- ***I would also like to request any documents regarding a pilot scheme for or about 26 week choice at your trust.***

The 26 Choice that I am referring to is outlined in the following document and specifically explained in the following text from that document.

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/2020-21-NHS-Operational-Planning-Contracting-Guidance.pdf>

“A number of pilot sites across the country are now putting in place practical solutions to offer patients who have been waiting for 26 weeks on an RTT pathway a meaningful choice of an alternative provider. During 2020/21, all providers and systems should be implementing supplementary choice at 26 weeks with reference to the 26 Week Choice Rules and Guidance and the best practice models emerging from the pilot programme. In preparation, providers

should ensure they have robust validation arrangements in place, so that waiting list data are as accurate as possible”.

County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust replies:

The Trust is not a pilot site for this work.

We do not have a specific policy regarding the latest requirements set out in the planning guidance but will be working this up for 2020/21 in line the guidance.

Following a workshop we attended in January, we understand choice at 26 is not going to be made mandatory until June 2021. However we are working with the independent sector now and our local CCGs to offer the choice of private sector for patients who have been waiting >26 weeks. It's work in progress at this stage.

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