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Request for Information Reference: 09.20.34

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

Email only

19 October 2020

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

Thank you for submitting a request for information which we received on 22 September 2020 in relation to County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust (the Trust). Your request has been processed under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and I am now able to provide you with a response.

Your request was in relation to the impact of COVID-19 on prostate cancer diagnosis, treatment and support pathways.

Please note that the Trust does not have a Urology service but is a host for services run by other Trusts. In accordance with Section 16 of the Act (duty to provide advice and assistance) the Trust would advise you to contact these Trusts directly for information in the first instance:

South Tees NHS Foundation Trust

Freedom of information  
information governance  
Murray Building  
The James Cook University Hospital  
Marton Road  
Middlesbrough  
TS4 3BW

[stees.foi.admin@nhs.net](mailto:stees.foi.admin@nhs.net)

South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS  
Foundation Trust

Freedom of Information Office  
Harton Wing  
South Tyneside District Hospital  
Harton Lane  
South Shields  
NE34 0PL

[Stsft.freedomofinformation@nhs.net](mailto:Stsft.freedomofinformation@nhs.net)

As explained above the Trust has not been able to provide answers to the questions you have submitted:

**1. Did you suspend your MRI before biopsy service for patients with suspected prostate cancer as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic?**

- a. Yes**
- b. No**
- c. We did not offer MRI before biopsy before the pandemic**

**2. If yes, have you now resumed MRI before biopsy for patients with suspected prostate cancer?**

- a. Yes**
- b. No**
- c. No, but we refer patients elsewhere (Please state the referral area:)**
- d. N/A**

**3. Do you currently use a pre-MRI clinical triage for patients with suspected prostate cancer? By pre-MRI clinical triage, we mean a process, often Clinical Nurse Specialist led, that determines patient suitability for MRI before biopsy**

- a. Yes**
- b. No**

**4. Has your radiology department introduced any new MRI exclusion criteria for patients with suspected prostate cancer as a result of COVID-19?**

- a. Yes (please specify:)**
- b. No**
- c. N/A**

**5. If yes, do you plan to maintain any of these exclusion criteria once restrictions to limit patients' COVID-19 risk are lifted?**

- a. Yes (please specify:)**
- b. No**
- c. N/A**

**6. Did you stop conducting biopsies for patients with suspected prostate cancer as a result of COVID-19 infection risks?**

- a. Yes**
- b. No**

**7. If yes, have you resumed biopsy services for patients with suspected prostate cancer?**

- a. Yes**
- b. Yes, but only for a subset of patients (please specify:)**
- c. No**
- d. No, but we refer patients elsewhere for prostate biopsy (Please state the referral area:)**

**8. Do you offer transperineal biopsy under local anaesthetic?**

- a. Yes**
- b. No**

c. No, but we plan to in future (please specify when if possible:)

9. Following an MRI scan for suspected prostate cancer, what criteria do you use to select patients for biopsy? Please include all that apply:

- a. Patients with a PI-RADS or Likert score of 1 or greater
- b. Patients with a PI-RADS or Likert score of 2 or greater
- c. Patients with a PI-RADS or Likert score of 3 or greater
- d. Patients with a PI-RADS or Likert score of 3 or greater, but only if PI-RADS or Likert score 3 patients have other clinical indications (such as age, ethnicity, PSA density) that make them higher risk
- e. Patients with a PI-RADS or Likert score of 4 or greater
- f. We do not offer MRI before biopsy
- g. We do not currently biopsy patients

10. Did you delay radiotherapy treatment for prostate cancer patients as a result of COVID-19?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Partially (please specify:)
- d. N/A (please specify:)

11. If yes, have you cleared your backlog for prostate cancer radiotherapy treatment?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. N/A – We did not delay prostate cancer radiotherapy treatment

12. Did you delay radical prostatectomy for prostate cancer patients as a result of COVID-19?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Partially (please specify:)
- d. N/A (please specify:)

13. If yes, have you cleared your radical prostatectomy backlog?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. N/A – We did not delay radical prostatectomy for prostate cancer patients

14. To address your backlog did or are you using a protocol to risk stratify patients and prioritise patients with high-risk and locally advanced prostate cancer for treatment within 3 months?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. No, we did not have a sufficient backlog to require patient prioritisation

**15. Does your protocol apply to new patients with high-risk and locally advanced prostate cancer with the intention to radically treat them within 3 months of diagnosis?**

- a. Yes**
- b. No**
- c. N/A - We do not have a protocol for patient prioritisation**

**16. Do you have prostate cancer Personalised Stratified Follow Up (PSFU) protocols in place?**

- a. Yes**
- b. No**
- c. We are in the process of developing PSFU protocols**

**17. If Yes, do you have a digital remote monitoring system in place for follow up?**

- a. Yes (Please specify the name of the system used: e.g My Medical Record, Patient Knows Best)**
- b. No**

**18. If no, do you plan to implement a digital remote monitoring system for follow up?**

- a. Yes - (Please specify the name of the system you plan to implement: e.g My Medical Record, Patient Knows Best)**
- b. No**

**19. Which of the following criteria are part of your follow up protocols? (please mark all that apply:)**

- a. Patients have access to a Support Worker who acts as their key worker for the duration of their follow up care.**
- b. Patients have access to an online patient service that allows them to check test results, complete assessments, view patient information and message their clinical team.**
- c. Patients attend a 4-hour supported self-management workshop with a group of 8 to 10 men to develop knowledge, skills and confidence to self-manage their condition**
- d. Patients do not need to attend routine appointments unless an issue arises.**

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 on the Trust's website. However please be assured that we anonymise all responses prior to adding them to the disclosure log.

I hope that this response has provided you with the information you had requested. I am sorry that I have not been able to provide all of the information you requested,

however I hope that my explanation as to why this is not possible has been satisfactory. If you have any queries or wish to discuss the information supplied, please do not hesitate to contact me by telephone or in writing. If however, you are dissatisfied with the way in which your request has been handled and would like an internal review, you will need to contact me in writing at the above address or via [cdda-tr.cddffoi@nhs](mailto:cdda-tr.cddffoi@nhs).

If you remain dissatisfied with our response following an internal review you have the right to appeal to The Information Commissioner at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. More information is available on their website; [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk).

Yours sincerely

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