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Request for Information Reference: 10.20.57

Email: cdda-tr.cddftfoi@nhs.net
Email only

27 November 2020

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request for Information

Thank you for submitting a request for information which we received on 28 October 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 public health funerals and I am providing the following information in response to your specific questions:

1. Does your NHS Trust organise, pay for and carry out public health funerals for people who die in the Trust's care and who don't have the financial means or family/ friends to arrange it?

Yes.

2. If no, which local council you refer public health funeral deaths to?

N/A.

3. If yes, please supply the following information (please see the attached spreadsheet I have put together to help you collate the data):

- a) How many public health funerals has your NHS Trust carried out each year for these financial years: 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/2019?
- b) Please state, out of the above figures, how many of those people were male and how many of those men had next of kin and how many of those men did not have next of kin?
- c) Please state, out of the above figures, how many of those people were female and how many of those women had next of kin and how many of those women did not have next of kin?
- d) Please state, out of the above figures, how many of those people were aged under 18, aged 18-59 or aged 60+?

- e) **Please state, out of the above figures, how many of those people were cremated, how many were buried in a grave of their own and how many were buried in a shared or communal grave (if that's applicable)?**
- f) **Please state, the net cost to the NHS Trust for all financial years: 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/2019?**

Please see the attached spreadsheet and note that there are areas which the Trust was unable to complete these have been marked as 'unknown'

The way in which the information relating to public funerals was recorded, changed after October 2015. At this point the Trust no longer needed to record or report data at the same level of detail as it had previously. As such the Trust does not have some of the information you have requested. In addition with regards to the 'net cost' column, the Trust does have the information, but it is not recorded in a way which would allow for the Trust to provide a response within the time frame allowed for FOIA responses (18 hours). The Trust can confirm that since April 2015 there have been around 1000 lines of spend recorded against funeral expenses in the Trust, totalling over £200k. These costs related to more than the information you have requested and to provide a breakdown of the costs in response to your request would require each record to be reviewed to determine if it relates to your request. 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.

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. 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.cddftfoi@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.

Yours sincerely

Joanna Tyrrell
Freedom of Information Officer