

Executive Corridor  
Darlington Memorial Hospital  
Hollyhurst Road  
Darlington  
DL3 6HX  
Switchboard Tel: 01325 38 0100

Request for Information Reference: 01.21.04

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

Email only

26 January 2021

## Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request for Information

Thank you for submitting a request for information which we received on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021 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 assault related injuries and I am providing the following information in response to your specific questions:

- 1. We are conducting an annual national study of attendances to Emergency Departments for assault-related injury and would be grateful if your department could provide us with attendance data for 2020. The data we require are as follows (for period 1st January 2020 and 31st December 2020) in an electronic format that allows us to read the data into a database:**
  - **The gender of the patient (M or F),**
  - **The date that they attended due to assault (dd/mm/yyyy) and**
  - **Their age, which can either be numerical to the nearest year (preferred) or in age bands ("0-10", "11-17", "18-30", "31-50", "51+"), we can also accept date of birth?**
  - **To calculate the level of assault-related injury in England and Wales we also require the total number of attendances for any reason.**
  - **Please also include the names of hospitals providing assault data?**

Due to the low number of patients, the Trust believes that if it were to provide the patient age or date of birth along with the hospital attended and the date on which they attended, this information could be used to identify specific individuals without their consent. As such the Trust is not able to release this level of detail as it would breach one of the data protection principles contained in the Data Protection Act 1998 in that it would render it possible to identify the individuals. We therefore believe that the exemption contained within section 40 of the Act is engaged.

Under section 40(2) of the Act it states that information which constitutes personal information about a third party will be exempt if disclosure of the third party personal

information would breach the third party's right to prevent processing likely to cause damage or distress (s40(3))

As the Trust believes disclosure of this information would be likely to cause distress to the individual/individual's family and that they have a reasonable expectation that this information would not be disclosed. We do not believe that it would be fair to those involved for this information to be made public. We therefore believe that the exemption contained within section 40(2) of the Act is engaged.

The Trust is able, however, to provide data which does not specify the ED attended, with attendances grouped by month and in the age bands you have suggested. As the Trust feels that this does not allow for individual patients to be identified. Please see the attached spreadsheet for this data. The data provided is for both the Darlington Memorial Hospital ED and the University Hospital North Durham ED combined.

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](mailto: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](http://www.ico.gov.uk).

Yours sincerely

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