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Request for Information Reference: 04.21.25

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

Email only

17 May 2021

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

Thank you for submitting a request for information which we received on 16 April 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 Referral To Treatment (RTT) incomplete pathways and I am providing the following information in response to your specific questions:

**Each month, your Trust submits RTT incomplete pathways data to NHS England. NHS England publish it as aggregate data, showing the numbers of incomplete pathways, broken down into weekly time bands: 0-1 weeks, >1-2 weeks, >2-3 weeks, >3-4 weeks, up to a final category 52+ weeks. The 52+ weeks category is not broken down in the published data.**

**1) Please provide (on an all-specialties basis, for the end of February 2021) your aggregate 52+ weeks incomplete pathways RTT data, broken down into weekly time bands: >52-53 weeks, >53-54 weeks, >54-55 weeks, and so on, up to the weekly time band containing the longest-waiting patient?**

**The published RTT incomplete pathways data separately identifies patients with a decision to admit, again broken down into weekly time bands, in the “Provider with DTA” worksheet of the published spreadsheets referred to above. Trusts have in recent months coded these patients by clinical priority (P1-P6), based on the guide published by the Federation of Surgical Specialty Associations ([https://fssa.org.uk/covid-19\\_documents.aspx](https://fssa.org.uk/covid-19_documents.aspx)). However the published RTT data is not broken down by clinical priority, nor do the time bands reflect the time since decision to admit. The clinical priority categories are:**

**Priority 1 (operation needed within 72 hours)**

**Priority 2 (surgery which can be deferred for up to four weeks)**

**Priority 3 (surgery which can be delayed for up to three months)**

**Priority 4 (surgery which can be delayed for more than three months)**

**Priority 5 (patients who have requested to remain on the waiting list but to defer treatment because of their concerns about covid-19)**

**Priority 6 (Patients who have been offered treatment but have declined to accept for non-Covid reasons, but still wish to remain on the waiting list)  
Or the patient may not have been assigned a priority.**

**2) Please provide (on an all-specialties basis, for the end of February 2021) your aggregate waiting times for incomplete pathways with a decision to admit for treatment, broken down by priority code, and also broken down by the time waited since decision to admit (NOT the time since referral) in weekly time bands: 0-1 weeks, >1-2 weeks, >2-3 weeks, >3-4 weeks, and so on, up to the weekly time band containing the patient who has waited longest since decision to admit?**

**Trusts have also started coding patients who do not have a decision to admit, using the same clinical priority categories.**

**3) Please provide (on an all-specialties basis, for the end of February 2021) your aggregate waiting times for incomplete pathways without a decision to admit for treatment, broken down by priority code, and also broken down by the time waited since referral in weekly time bands: 0-1 weeks, >1-2 weeks, >2-3 weeks, >3-4 weeks, and so on, up to the weekly time band containing the patient who has waited longest?**

**If data for the end of February 2021 is no longer available, then more recent data may be provided instead, in which case please advise the census date you have used.**

The level of detail requested is not available on the Trust's month end RTT return snapshots as requested. The Trust is unable to provide a validated response to your request.

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 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.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