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Darlington Memorial Hospital
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Switchboard Tel: 01325 38 0100

Request for Information Reference: 05.21.01

Email: cdda-tr.cddftfoi@nhs.net

Email only

11 June 2021

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request for Information

Thank you for submitting a request for information which we received on 4 May 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 money lost to fraud by Trusts and I am providing the following information in response to your specific questions:

- 1. The amount during each calendar year for the last five years your Trust has lost to fraud and scams? This would include the year to date as one of those five years?**
- 2. For each fraud or scam of more than £500 the nature of the fraud or scam, particularly:**
 - a. The date the money was lost**
 - b. How much was lost**
 - c. How the money was lost - the precise methodology the scammers used**
 - d. What efforts were made to reclaim the lost funds**
 - e. How successful those efforts were.**
 - f. Who the perpetrator was, if that is known**

Should there be a large number of frauds which qualify for question 2, to the point where costs for the request are likely to over-run, I would like the details for the five largest in terms of losses, please?

For the avoidance of doubt, I am interested in losses of money due to deception. I am not requesting details of losses of money or property due to theft, burglary etc.

The Trust believes that disclosing this information could be likely to prejudice the prevention or detection of a crime. Section 31 (1) (a) of the Act states that information is exempt if its disclosure under the Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice the prevention or detection of crime. The Trust believes that if it was to confirm or deny

the existence and disclose the content of reports into fraud during the time period specified this could provide intelligence to fraudsters that they have or have not been detected. This could in turn enable further fraud to be undertaken. As there are current and active alerts in place for fraud in the region, as well as active investigations ongoing on a regional and/or national scale, the Trust is exempting the information requested.

Prior to reaching this decision the Trust undertook a public interest test to review the risk and impact of not disclosing the requested information against the risk and impact of disclosure. While the Act encourages public bodies to be transparent the risk and likely prejudice from disclosure was believed to be greater. Please note that before making the final decision the Trust did consult with their Counter Fraud Specialist to determine how likely the risk of potential harm could be following disclosure. It also reviewed previous cases which have been taken to the ICO.

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.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