

Freedom of Information Request

Ref: 23-352

14 June 2023

By Email

Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The Trust's response is as follows:

- We can confirm that we do hold the information you are requesting

The following requests relate to the expenditure and income generated from the 'charging policy', excluding any generated through private paying patients or monies claimed back from countries as part of any reciprocal healthcare arrangement.

>>> [QUESTION 1] <<<

As per the trusts application of the 'charging policy' for each financial year from 2015-2023 please provide (i) the total number of and (ii) the total value of:

(1a) Invoices generated

Division	Volume	Value
Diagnostics And Therapies	219	£521,302.33
Human Resources	15	£2,107.42
IT	4	£56.60
Medicine	396	£896,613.36
Miscellaneous Support Services	3	£9,279.56
Specialised Services	135	£880,181.21
Surgery	1159	£1,650,940.06
Not recorded	21	£69,850.21
Weston Division	1	£718.50
Women's And Children's	562	£2,579,507.85

(1b) Payments received

Division	Volume	Value
Diagnostics And Therapies	288	(£144,088.43)
Human Resources	3	(£1,083.00)
Medicine	196	(£234,338.06)

Specialised Services	111	(£222,170.95)
Surgery	1260	(£468,796.79)
Not recorded	180	(£55,399.22)
Women's And Children's	902	(£571,853.44)

(1c) Credit notes issued after a patient has been invoiced for care and later found to be eligible for free treatment

Please note this data is from 2019/20 onwards. The Trust does not hold the data for years prior to 2019/20 in a format that would enable us to fully respond to your request to the level of detail required and a manual trawl for this information would significantly exceed the 18 hours limit set down by the FOI as the reasonable limit. Section 12 of the FOIA provides that we are not obliged to spend in excess of 18 hours in any sixty-day period locating, retrieving and identifying information in order to deal with a request for information and therefore we are withholding this information at this time.

Division	Volume	Value
Diagnostics And Therapies	27	(£125,869.92)
Medicine	88	(£185,065.50)
Miscellaneous Support Services	1	(£655.82)
Specialised Services	25	(£215,857.07)
Surgery	130	(£177,927.11)
Women's And Children's	174	(£817,222.71)

(1d) Invoices written off for accounting purposes due to a patient being considered destitute as per the conditions set out in 13.72 and 13.73 of the charging policy.

Please note this data is from 2019/20 onwards. The Trust does not hold the data for years prior to 2019/20 in a format that would enable us to fully respond to your request to the level of detail required and a manual trawl for this information would significantly exceed the 18 hours limit set down by the FOI as the reasonable limit. Section 12 of the FOIA provides that we are not obliged to spend in excess of 18 hours in any sixty-day period locating, retrieving and identifying information in order to deal with a request for information and therefore we are withholding this information at this time.

Division	Volume	Value
Diagnostics And Therapies	22	(£70,545.55)
Medicine	79	(£193,233.66)
Specialised Services	17	(£183,262.97)
Surgery	163	(£276,492.98)
Not recorded	20	(£100,628.96)
Women's And Children's	71	(£241,168.96)

(1e) Debts passed onto debt collection agencies for recovery due to non-payment.

The table below is debt currently with a debt agency. Regarding the historic data, please note the Trust does not hold the data in a format that would enable us to fully respond to your request to the level of detail required and a manual trawl for this information would significantly exceed the 18 hours limit set down by the FOI as the reasonable limit. Section 12 of the FOIA

provides that we are not obliged to spend in excess of 18 hours in any sixty-day period locating, retrieving and identifying information in order to deal with a request for information and therefore we are withholding this information at this time.

Division	Volume	Value
Surgery	*	£1,730.00
Women's And Children's	*	£3,628.35

Please note: Where the figures are between 1 and 5, this has been denoted by *. Due to the low numbers, we have considered that there is the potential for individuals to be identified from the information provided, when considered with other information that may also be in the public domain. In our view disclosure of these low figures would breach one of the Data Protection Principles set out in Schedule 1 of the Data Protection Act, namely Principle 1. The Trust therefore finds that the Section 40(2) exemption contained within the Freedom of information Act 2000 is engaged. (Section 40 is the exemption for personal information).

For each of the above requests from 1a to 1e inclusive, please provide a breakdown by speciality, department, or similar categorisation (see appendix 1 for example formatting).

We have included the hospital division for each answer. Please note, the Trust does not hold the data in a format that would enable us to fully respond to your request to the level of detail required and a manual trawl for this information would significantly exceed the 18 hours limit set down by the FOI as the reasonable limit. Section 12 of the FOIA provides that we are not obliged to spend in excess of 18 hours in any sixty-day period locating, retrieving and identifying information in order to deal with a request for information and therefore we are withholding this information at this time.

>>> [QUESTION 2] <<<

Please provide a breakdown by speciality, department, or similar categorisation of (i) the number of patients currently on a repayment plan with the trust for debt incurred under the charging policy and (ii) a breakdown by value of repayment - For example, the number of patients paying £1/month, £5/month, £10/month, etc. (see appendix 1 for example formatting).

The table below is debts currently on repayment plans

Value	Volume	Value
£100+	101	£347,498.35
£10-20	29	£432.19
£20-50	92	£2,792.93
£50-100	232	£13,189.96
£5-10	25	£210.86
Under £5	78	£129.60

(2a) Please also provide the number of patients who entered a new payment plan with the trust, for each financial year from 2015-2023.

Please note, the Trust does not hold the data in a format that would enable us to fully respond to your request to the level of detail required and a manual trawl for this information would significantly exceed the 18 hours limit set down by the FOI as the reasonable limit. Section 12 of the FOIA provides that we are not obliged to spend in excess of 18 hours in any sixty-day period locating, retrieving and identifying information in order to deal with a request for information and therefore we are withholding this information at this time.

>>> [QUESTION 3] <<<

Please share any formal or informal criteria, policies, procedures, or similar the trust currently uses or has used from 2015 - 2023 to determine how:

(a) A patient's debt is managed

(b) The trust agrees upon the value of a patient's monthly repayment plan.

The extract below is taken from a review of the processes carried out last year:

When making decisions regarding affordability, the Income Recovery Lead at NHS Improvement have signposted the Trust to the Standard Financial Statement (SFS). SFS is a debt advice tool used to summarise a person's income and outgoings, along with any debts they owe.

By using this tool, the Accounts Receivable team can quickly assess a patient's income and expenditure and make a decision in conjunction with the patient regarding repayment and affordability. If the output suggests the patient cannot pay and the patient may be destitute, the Accounts Receivable Manager can use the tool to create a case for the invoice to be written off.

>>> [QUESTION 4] <<<

For each financial year from 2015-2023, please provide the total number of patients whose information has been shared with the Home Office in relation to a debt:

(a) Greater than £500 owed for more than 2 months

(b) Greater than £500 owed for less than 2 months

(c) Less than £500

We are legally obliged to share Overseas Visitors debtor data with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) when that debt is for £500 or more and aged 60 days+. The DHSC share that data with the Home Office, but we do not have sight of that submission. On that basis we cannot answer the question posed as we cannot be certain of the information flow between DHSC and Home Office.

This concludes our response. We trust that you find this helpful, but please do not hesitate to contact us directly if we can be of any further assistance.

If, after that, you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to:

Data Protection Officer
University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust
Trust Headquarters
Marlborough Street
Bristol
BS1 3NU

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

Publication

Please note that this letter and the information included/attached will be published on our website as part of the Trust's Freedom of Information Publication Log. This is because information disclosed in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act is disclosed to the public, not just to the individual making the request. We will remove any personal information (such as your name, email and so on) from any information we make public to protect your personal information.

To view the Freedom of Information Act in full please click [here](#).

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Team
University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust