

Freedom of Information Request

Ref: 23-552

23 August 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

Q1. How many individuals have been discharged to 'no fixed abode' from hospitals within your trust? Where possible please provide data both by individual medical department and as a whole (for the entire Trust).

Please provide data for each of the following financial years:

- 2022/2023 (or the latest financial year)

If you do not hold data on the number of individuals, please provide the number of discharges there have been to 'no fixed abode'.

2022/2023	
Hospital	Discharges
Bristol Eye Hospital	*
Bristol Haematology and Oncology Centre	11
Bristol Royal Hospital for Children	*
Bristol Royal Infirmary	263
St Michael's Hospital	*
Weston General Hospital	36

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. This follows NHS Digital (formerly HSCIC) analysis guidance (2014) which states that small numbers within local

authorities, wards, postcode districts, providers and Trusts may allow identification of patients and should not be published.

- 2017/2018

2017/2018	
Hospital	Discharges
Bristol Eye Hospital	*
Bristol Royal Infirmary	697
South Bristol NHS Community Hospital	*
St Michael's Hospital	*

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Q2a. Of those individuals who were discharged to 'no fixed abode' (in Q1) how many were readmitted within six months?

Please provide data for each of the following financial years:

- 2022/2023 (or the latest financial year)

If you do not hold data on the number of individuals, please provide the number of readmissions.

2022/2023	
Hospital	Readmits
Bristol Eye Hospital	0
Bristol Haematology and Oncology Centre	11
Bristol Royal Hospital for Children	0
Bristol Royal Infirmary	153
St Michael's Hospital	*
Weston General Hospital	22

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- 2017/2018

2017/2018	
Hospital	Readmits
Bristol Eye Hospital	0
Bristol Royal Infirmary	531
South Bristol NHS Community Hospital	0
St Michael's Hospital	*

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. This follows NHS Digital (formerly HSCIC) analysis guidance (2014) which states that small numbers within local authorities, wards, postcode districts, providers and Trusts may allow identification of patients and should not be published.

Q2b. Of the individuals in Q2a, how many individuals were readmitted because of substance use issues?

Please provide data for each of the following financial years:

- 2022/2023 (or the latest financial year)

- 2017/2018

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.

Q3. Does your NHS Trust have guidance/policy in place that details how to support a patient who is being discharged from hospital to 'no fixed abode'?

The Homeless Support Team are based at the Bristol Royal Infirmary (BRI) and cover all Adult Areas. One of our objectives is to whenever possible support people who are experiencing homelessness in accessing accommodation and prevent returning to rough sleeping. As part of this we attempt to fulfill the Trust's legal 'Duty to Refer' (Under the Homeless Reduction Act): that is to inform the local authority (Housing Department) of an individual's

homelessness. We make referrals to the Homeless Prevention Teams in the local authorities to request assistance with emergency /temporary accommodation on discharge from hospital. Local authorities differ in process but we have a local agreement with Bristol City Council with guidelines for inpatients and those attending the Emergency Department. For those that will be returning to rough sleeping we offer advice regarding services and agencies within the community and referral on to Outreach Teams. Another of our main objectives is to address health inequalities for people experiencing homelessness and to encourage health inclusion. The team aim to support as safe a discharge as possible from hospital making links and referrals to a variety of partner agencies in the community and working closely with other specialist teams within the trust such as Drug and Alcohol services, Psychiatric liaison, Independent Domestic and Sexual Violence Advisors (IDSVAs), Safeguarding.

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

