

**Freedom of Information Request**

**Ref: 23-812**

7 November 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

**We would like to understand the use of Full Blood Count tests (FBC; also called Complete Blood Count, CBC) for chemotherapy cancer treatment given by your hospitals. This can cover tests prescribed to be done in-hospital or at a point-of-care unit (pharmacy, GP) in the last year January 2022-January 2023.**

**We would be grateful if you could respond to the following questions:**

**1. What percentage of FBC tests alone (without a biochemistry test such as kidney function) are prescribed for chemotherapy patients per month?**

All chemotherapy patients would have a full set of bloods including biochemistry, liver function and FBC before each cycle. However, some patients have day 8 and 15 patients have additional full blood counts before the day 8 and 15 treatments. This would be approximately 3% of patients, who are on those regimens.

**2. For the services in your hospital, are FBC tests prescribed to be done at the hospital, in a GP unit or at the pharmacy or in some other primary care setting?**

These tests can be done in a variety of settings, and we give the patients some choice over this. We can offer to book the FBC in the hospital setting, or one of our community-based satellite units, which are run by our hospital based nursing teams. Patients also have the option to self-book a blood test with their GP.

**3. What is the expected time for FBC tests scheduled before chemotherapy - 72h before chemotherapy day, 48h, 24h, or on the day of chemotherapy?**

That is regimen specific, but we usually advise that 48-72 hours is optimum, but up to 96 hours is fine for most regimens. As mentioned for question 1, some regimens have day 8 and 15 treatments, and they require an additional FBC within 24 hours of chemotherapy. Many of

these would be done on the day if the patient is attending the main site for chemotherapy.

**4. In the last year January 2022-January 2023 how many cancer treatment appointments for chemotherapy were cancelled due to the patient having neutropenia and/or thrombocytopenia on the same day as chemotherapy scheduled appointment?**

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.

**5. What are chemotherapies that only require an FBC test to decide if chemotherapy can be administered (without other biochemistry tests such as kidney function)?**

As mentioned in the answers to questions 1 and 4 above, this would be for day 8 and 15 bloods only on regimens that have those as part of the treatment, e.g. weekly Paclitaxel, Carboplatin and Gemcitabine, Cisplatin and Gemcitabine, Gemcitabine and Capecitabine. As mentioned in my answer to question 1 and 4, this would be for day 8 and 15 bloods only on regimens that have those as part of the treatment. This includes weekly Paclitaxel, Carboplatin and Gemcitabine, Cisplatin and Gemcitabine, Gemcitabine and Capecitabine. These are examples, not an exhaustive list.

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**