

Freedom of Information Request

Ref: UHB 20-151

4 August 2020

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.

1. Please describe what written guidelines / protocols and governance procedures are currently in place at Bristol Royal Infirmary, for the management of AF ablation treatment? Please attach a copy of Bristol Royal Infirmary written protocol for the management of AF ablation treatments.

- a. There is no Bristol Heart Institute specific protocol for management of atrial fibrillation. The Trust follows national and international guidelines e.g. NICE guidance for AF (<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg180>) , and ESC 2016 guidelines for management of atrial fibrillation (<https://www.escardio.org/Guidelines/Clinical-Practice-Guidelines/Atrial-Fibrillation-Management>).
We have protocols for a “convergent procedure“ for persistent AF (please see attached).
- b. We submit data for all our ablations to the national NICOR EP/Ablations database and a report is generated by them yearly.
- c. Unusual or unexpected complications of AF ablations are discussed in our departmental mortality and morbidity meeting

2. Please confirm the inclusion and exclusion criteria that Bristol Royal Infirmary follows for patients with:

- a. **Paroxysmal and Persistent AF:** Please see below responses b and c.
- b. **Paroxysmal AF only**

As per the above guidelines we offer an ablation procedure for symptomatic patients with PAF who do not respond to medical treatment. We also offer an ablation procedure as a first line treatment for selected (relatively young) patients who are expected to have a good outcome from the ablation procedure.

c. Persistent AF only

As per guidelines, we offer an ablation for symptomatic atrial fibrillation not improved by medical treatment or LV dysfunction attributable to the AF. Patients with persistent atrial fibrillation of <1- 2 years are usually offered endocardial ablations. Selected patients with longstanding atrial fibrillation may be offered a convergent procedure (see attached information).

3. Please confirm the decision making process governing 'redo' / repeat procedures.

Symptomatic recurrences of atrial fibrillation resistant to medical treatment (beyond first three months after the index ablation) or those who present with atrial tachycardia, are usually offered an ablation procedure if they wish to have one. The decision is made after discussion with an electrophysiologist in clinic.

4. Please confirm what written patient information is offered to patients undergoing AF ablation procedures and attach a copy.

We supply patients with the attached AF ablation booklet from the AF Association/ Arrhythmia Alliance (<https://www.heartrhythmalliance.org/afa/uk/ablation-for-af>) which explains the procedure in detail.

We also direct patients to the AFA/AA website for further information/resources on the condition

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:

Director of Corporate Governance
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