

Freedom of Information Request

Ref: UHB 20-272

24 September 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. **Where mental health patients arriving at your Trust's hospital(s) or A&E department(s) are asked to wait before being assessed and whether this is in an area where patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 are.**

All patients are screened for symptoms of Covid-19 when they book in to the Emergency Department. Ambulatory patients are cohorted in an open area, but they are advised to social distance and wear masks. Patients of high acuity requiring "majors" are kept isolated if they have symptoms of Covid-19.

The Trust has signs up in the waiting room that state if a patient is uncomfortable with sharing the reasons for their attendance with the reception staff, then they should say they are here with a "personal" problem so they don't get questioned.

2. **Are waiting/assessment areas completely separate, with their own access and exit areas and other facilities including but not exclusively toilets?**

There is no separate area for mental health patients. There is one communal waiting room with one communal toilet, and communal exits and entrances.

3. **Are mental health patients given PPE if asked to walk through COVID-19 contaminated areas?**

Every member of staff and every patient or relative is given a mask to wear and asked to sanitise their hands as they walk into our hospitals. They must keep the mask on in all areas as per national guidance. The areas in our hospitals designated for patients with confirmed Covid-19 infection are closed to other patients and visitors.

4. **What is the policy to determine whether an arriving mental health patient should be treated in a COVID-19 zone?**

All patients who attend the Emergency Department are screened for Covid-19. Patients are treated in the areas most appropriate to their acuity. Mental Health patients are referred to mental health liaison during the day 08:00-21:00 and overnight they are

referred to Avon and Wiltshire Partnership Mental Health team.

5. Are patients arriving given any warning about the increased risk of COVID-19 infection from hospital? What measures are in place for patients who lack capacity to understand and consent to these warnings?

By adhering to the national guidelines, all areas of the hospitals have been risk assessed to confirm their capacity and all staff, patients and visitors are required to wear masks or appropriate PPE as required and sanitise their hands. Posters and leaflets are available to patients. There are no specific measures in place for incapacitous patients, however staff will contact carers or relatives of patients, who do not have capacity, to explain the situation.

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**