

**Freedom of Information Request**

**Ref: 22-270**

7 June 2022

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. Does the Trust provide hypoxic challenge testing services?**

Yes.

**2. If yes, is HCT testing provided as an NHS service or as a private service?**

NHS (and private if requested).

**3. If HCT testing is offered as a private service, what is the fee?**

Approximately £198.

**4. Do patients need a GP referral or consultant referral to access hypoxic challenge testing?**

Consultant referral.

**5. How is the HCT/fitness to fly service "marketed" to GPs and private patients?**

It is not marketed to GPs and private patients.

**6. Which patient groups / morbidities typically require HCT testing? e.g. patients with long Covid, COPD etc.**

Please find the latest guidance in the following link:

<https://www.brit-thoracic.org.uk/document-library/clinical-statements/air-travel/bts-clinical-statement-on-air-travel/>

**7. How many hypoxic challenge tests have been completed in the last year?**

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022 to date
46	58	64	15	10	21

**8. What is the current waiting time to access an HCT test?**

Currently a few weeks for a standalone flight test, if other tests needed in parallel then this could be over a month to allow for a longer slot.

**9. Has the emergence of long Covid added to demand for fit to fly assessments in recent months?**

We have not seen any demand for flight assessments in long COVID as yet.

**10. For patients referred for a fitness to fly assessment, what outputs does the patient receive? e.g. a letter from a respiratory consultant advising whether they will need supplementary oxygen when flying, a consultation, any other intervention.**

A clinical scientist's report including copy of the results of the test. This provides the recommendation for if supplemental oxygen is required and if so, at what flow rate. A copy is also sent to the referring physician.

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**