

Freedom of Information Request - Internal Review

Ref: 24-222

29 April 2024

By Email

Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for your email dated 2nd April 2024 requesting a review of the Trust's response to your recent request for information.

The purpose of an Internal Review is to assess how your Freedom of Information request was handled in the first instance and to determine whether the original decision given to you was correct. This is an independent review and reviewers were not involved in the original decision.

Your request

For Bi-lateral cleft lip and palate.

The mean, mode and range surgical wait times from birth for primary lip repair and primary palate repair for 2022 and 2023?

Mean: 10.789473

Mode: 6 and 8 months

Range: 23 months

For Uni-lateral cleft lip and palate.

The mean, mode and range surgical wait times from birth for primary lip repair and primary palate repair for 2022 and 2023?

Mean: 8.647058

Mode: 10 months

Range: 23 months

What staff vacancies are there within the cleft multi-disciplinary team?

Nursing: No vacancies

Speech and language: No vacancies

Surgical team: No vacancies

Admin: Band 5 SWCS Coordinator 0.4 WTE vacant

0.4 WTE data manager currently vacant.

Is speech investigation equipment still broken after 3 years since being requested by the cleft team in 2019? Has emergency funding for this been requested and / or

accepted?

A new image intensifier was purchased in 2020 via emergency capital. Due to the pandemic and lack of available and appropriate space in the dental hospital, it took some time for this to be operational. SPIN clinics restarted in the Bristol Royal Hospital for Children in September 2020 until February 2022, and in the Bristol Dental Hospital from April 2023 to present. We are still awaiting the procurement of Vidiview to support these clinics.

Is the London School of topical medicine looking at the impact on covid on primary surgery and is Bristol shown to be a significant outlier?

We do not hold this information.

What is the current wait for VF radiography speech investigation?

Approximately 232 days

What is the current wait for nasoendoscopy speech investigation?

Approximately 232 days

What is the current wait time for speech correction surgery?

Approximately 223 days

Has speech correction surgery been directly affected by the prioritisation of primary speech surgery?

All patients are listed according to clinical priority followed by length of time on waiting list.

Your request for an internal review

I hope this email finds you well.

I am writing to express my disagreement with the response provided to a recent Freedom of Information request. The information I seek has been provided to me in the past for previous year data sets, and I find it reasonable to request it again for the years 2022 and 2023 to provide a comparison of UHBWs improvements in the cleft service.

It is crucial to note the distinction between primary lip and primary palate operations, as they are separate procedures with unique implications. The recent response from UHBW, which does not separate these data sets, seems quite unusual, particularly given the significance in outcome between the two operations as per the Harm review into the cleft service.

Therefore, I can I kindly request that you discuss with the freedom of information team to provide the information in the same format as my previous request (Ref: 21-482), covering unilateral and bi-lateral cleft lip and palate operations for the years 2022 and 2023, separately for primary lip and primary palate operations.

Your attention to this matter would be greatly appreciated.

Outcome of the review

On viewing our response, the Trust's Data Protection Officer has agreed that the Trust will provide the information again to provide the information for the procedures separately – please see our updated response below:

For Bi-lateral cleft lip and palate.

The mean, mode and range surgical wait times from birth for primary lip repair and primary palate repair for 2022 and 2023?

For Uni-lateral cleft lip and palate.

The mean, mode and range surgical wait times from birth for primary lip repair and primary palate repair for 2022 and 2023?

Please see the table below.

		Year of birth	
	Weeks between patients' DOB and inpatient procedure date	2022	2023
BCLP, primary lip repair	Mean	25	23
	Mode	25	25
	Min	38	34
	Max	45	39
BCLP, primary palate repair	Mean	60	51
	Mode	-	-
	Min	59	46
	Max	60	56
UCLP, primary lip repair	Mean	34	28
	Mode	36	-
	Min	16	21
	Max	43	36
UCLP, primary palate repair	Mean	54	47
	Mode	-	-
	Min	35	43
	Max	63	50

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Appeal Rights

After an internal review, you can appeal the decision to the Information Commissioner, subject to meeting their appeal criteria. Details of how to appeal to the Information Commissioner's Office can be found here: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/foi-and-eir-complaints/foi-and-eir-complaints/>.

In addition, you may wish to write directly to: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Yours faithfully

**Data Protection Officer
University Hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS Foundation Trust**