

Freedom of Information Request

Ref: 24-528

18 July 2024

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 hold some of the information you are requesting

I am writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to request the following information on babies being born with neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS) and fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS).

Please provide a breakdown on the number of babies being born with FAS in 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 (please break it down by year).

2020: - 0

2021: - 0

2022: - 0

2023: - *

Please note: Where the figures are between 1 and 5, this has been denoted by *. Due to the low numbers, we have considered that there is the potential for individuals to be identified from the information provided, when considered with other information that may also be in the public domain. In our view disclosure of these low figures would breach one of the Data Protection Principles set out in Schedule 1 of the Data Protection Act, namely Principle 1. The Trust therefore finds that the Section 40(2) exemption contained within the Freedom of information Act 2000 is engaged. This follows NHS Digital (formerly HSCIC) analysis guidance (2014) which states that small numbers within local authorities, wards, postcode districts, providers and Trusts may allow identification of patients and should not be published.

Please provide a breakdown on the number of babies being born at your trust that required treatment for NAS in 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023. Please break this down by year and also by substance:

- Opioids
- Cocaine
- Benzodiazepines

- Antidepressants
- Methadone/ buprenorphine
- Cannabis
- Any other substances that a newborn may be born with a dependency to and may need require treatment because of it that aren't specified.

2020: - 13

2021: - 18

2022: - 10

2023: - *

We cannot identify the breakdown of figures by substance, our systems do not capture the data in this way. Further to this, these patients are not necessarily being treated for neonatal abstinence syndrome.

Please note: Where the figures are between 1 and 5, this has been denoted by *. Due to the low numbers, we have considered that there is the potential for individuals to be identified from the information provided, when considered with other information that may also be in the public domain. In our view disclosure of these low figures would breach one of the Data Protection Principles set out in Schedule 1 of the Data Protection Act, namely Principle 1. The Trust therefore finds that the Section 40(2) exemption contained within the Freedom of information Act 2000 is engaged. This follows NHS Digital (formerly HSCIC) analysis guidance (2014) which states that small numbers within local authorities, wards, postcode districts, providers and Trusts may allow identification of patients and should not be published.

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