

Freedom of Information Request

Ref: 24-711

9 October 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 do hold the information you are requesting

I would like to know how long it would take for you to evacuate your NICU department in the event of a fire or other major incident.

Under the current NHS fire safety guidance, we utilise a strategy known as progressive horizontal evacuation. This approach enables us to move patients away from a fire to a fire-free compartment or sub-compartment on the same level. The time required for our NICU to evacuate will vary based on the number of patients affected and their clinical needs.

Within the department, we have designated sub-compartments. The initial step in our evacuation plan involves transferring patients from the affected area to an adjoining fire-free sub-compartment, referred to as a "place of relative safety." If the situation escalates, we would continue to relocate patients to the next available sub-compartment. Overall, we estimate that the evacuation of NICU patients to a place of relative safety could take approximately 30 minutes.

I recently saw that the lifts in the maternity hospital are not to be used in the event of a fire, so what is your evacuation plan to get babies and staff out?

The general guidance across the Trust is that lifts should not be used during a fire. This precaution is in place to protect staff, patients, and visitors from the risk of exposure to a fire situation on another floor when the lift doors open.

At St. Michael's Hospital, we have fire escape staircases located around the perimeter of the building specifically designed for emergencies. Additionally, the Trust is equipped with fire evacuation equipment to assist in the evacuation of patients. In the event of a fire, we will co-ordinate with the attending fire service professionals to determine the safest course of action based on the location and condition of the fire.

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