

Freedom of Information Request

Ref: 24-739

10 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

1. Number of Women Using a Birthing Pool/Water Immersion Following a Previous Caesarean Section:

Please provide the number of women who had a previous caesarean section and used a birthing pool or water immersion during a subsequent labour and/or birth in your Trust for each of the following time periods:

- 1. 01 January 2013 – 31 December 2013 - 0**
- 2. 01 January 2014 – 31 December 2014 - 0**
- 3. 01 January 2015 – 31 December 2015 - 0**
- 4. 01 January 2016 – 31 December 2016 - ***
- 5. 01 January 2017 – 31 December 2017 - ***
- 6. 01 January 2018 - 31 December 2018 - 6**
- 7. 01 January 2019 - 31 December 2019 - ***
- 8. 01 January 2020 - 31 December 2020 - ***
- 9. 01 January 2021 - 31 December 2021 - ***
- 10. 01 January 2022 - 31 December 2022 - 0**
- 11. 01 January 2023 - 31 December 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local authorities, wards, postcode districts, providers and Trusts may allow identification of patients and should not be published.

2. Clinical Guidelines:

- **Please provide copies of any current maternity/midwifery/obstetric clinical guidelines, policies or protocols specifically relating to:**
- **The use of water immersion or birthing pools during labour and/or birth.**
- **Vaginal birth after caesarean section (VBAC).**
- **Please provide copies of any other maternity/midwifery/obstetric clinical guidelines, policies or protocols which contain information about water immersion/birthing pools during labour and/or birth.**
- **Please provide copies of any other maternity/midwifery/obstetric clinical guidelines, policies or protocols which contain information about vaginal birth after caesarean section.**

Please see the attached documents.

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