

Freedom of Information Request

Ref: 25-429

24th June 2025

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 some of the information you are requesting

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I would like to request the following information:

1a. A copy of any policies, standard operating procedure or guidance that sets out how the Trust identifies who qualifies as a foreign national or overseas visitor required to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS).

We do not have a policy. We use a combination of the NHS MESH system to gather information from the National Care Records Service and our own data within our patient administration system to identify query Overseas visitors. This is undertaken on a daily basis. We then engage with the patients via SMS, email, letter and telephone to establish their charging status. Furthermore, we can check immigration history via share codes and make direct approaches to the Home Office.

1b. Please provide the results of the last audit of this policy and compliance levels with it. If such an audit has not been conducted within the last five years, please say so.

No audit has taken place

2. A copy of any policies that set out what steps are taken if a patient, eligible to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS), seeks to access (or in fact has already accessed) services provided by the Trust for which payment would be owed.

We identify these patients through the process in question 1 response above, If they have paid the IHS they are exempted from charge for most services. If they are chargeable then we raise an invoice for their treatment costs.

3a. A copy of any policies, standard operating procedure or guidance which set out the steps taken to invoice a foreign national for any episode of care delivered by the Trust which was not billed/ invoiced for prior to the episode of care being delivered.

We do not have a policy. When an invoice is presented to the individual it is payable immediately, The Trust follows a dunning process if payment is not received in a timely manner.

3b. A copy of any policies, standard operating procedure or guidance that set out the steps the Trust takes to collect unpaid debts where an episode / episodes of care have been provided to a foreign national.

We do not have a policy.

3c. Data which sets out the total amount (in GBP) for each of the last 3 calendar years that has been collected for the provision of any episode of care for a foreign national (i.e. any individual who is not entitled to that care free at the point of use).

i. Collected by the Trust - This is the total collected, it may contain debts collected by a third party - £389,635

ii. Collected by a third party – We are unable to provide this information. The total is provided above and we cannot break this down.

iii. That the Trust has written off - £619,512

3d. The total amount (in GBP) which remains uncollected by the Trust for the provision of any episode of care for a foreign national. - £1,218,893

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