

Freedom of Information Request

Ref: 25-652

8 August 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 the information you are requesting

Under the Freedom of Information Act I am requesting the following information from the trust:

1. The number of harm reviews carried out on lung cancer patients who faced lengthy waits for treatment between 1 January 2023 and 31 December 2024 (please do not include incomplete reviews)

242 on 62-day pathways, 372 on 31-day pathways (please note many patients who breach one standard will also have breached the other, so the number of unique patients would be lower than the total of the two figures here). As the Trust has a lower threshold for conducting harm reviews than many organisations, it is likely these numbers will appear very high in comparison to other responses the requestor may receive. The Trust also had thoracic surgery capacity problems during the period in question due to industrial action and the greatly increased demand from the new lung screening programme, meaning high numbers breached the standards and thus required review.

2. The number of cases where harm was found in lung cancer patients and the level of harm in each: e.g, low harm, medium harm, severe harm

Moderate harm: *

Major harm: *

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providers and Trusts may allow identification of patients and should not be published.

3. In lung cancer cases where there was severe harm, please provide a short but specific description of what the harm was: e.g. stage migration, patient moved straight to palliative care etc;

*

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4. After how many days does the trust initiate harm reviews of lung cancer patients that have faced lengthy waits for treatments? (please state a number and do not include links to policies)

We undertake a harm review on all patients with a cancer diagnosis who waited longer than 62 days from referral/upgrade to treatment and/or longer than 31 days from decision to treat to treatment, for a reason other than patient choice or clinical necessity. Many Trusts set a higher threshold of 104 days, however we choose to assess all patients in recognition that harm from waiting times is more often seen in those who narrowly miss the target, than in very long waiters. For example, of the harm cases above, * were treated <day 104 of their pathway and may not have been identified if the Trust used a higher threshold.

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