

**Information Governance Department**

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Ref: FOI/2024/10125

Date Received: 13<sup>th</sup> September 2024

Response Due: 11<sup>th</sup> October 2024

Date: 10<sup>th</sup> October 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

With reference to your request for information received on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2024, I can confirm in accordance with Section 1 (1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 that we do hold part of the information you have requested. A response to each part of your request is provided below.

In your request you asked:

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

### **Availability of NT-proBNP testing**

**1. How many Community Diagnostic Centres are currently operational in your area?**

1 Community Diagnostic Centre at Leigh.

**2. Is NT-proBNP testing for suspected heart failure currently available within local Community Diagnostic Centres? (please specify if any local Community Diagnostic Centres do not offer NT-proBNP testing)**

Pro BNP tests can be requested at Leigh CDC via a regular phlebotomy request (not current POCT).

**3. If NT-proBNP testing for suspected heart failure is not currently available, are there any plans to introduce it in future?**

There are plans to introduce POCT pro-BNP in addition to the regular route.

### **Testing Volume**

**1. How many NT-proBNP blood tests have been performed by the local Community Diagnostic Centre between January 2021 to August 2024?**

The Trust is unable to provide this information due to the way the data is recorded. The tests performed by the local Community Diagnostic Centre cannot be split from the total NT-proBNP blood tests performed within the Trust.

**2. How many BNP blood tests have been performed by the local Community Diagnostic Centre between January 2021 to August 2024?**

The Trust is unable to provide this information due to the way the data is recorded. The tests performed by the local Community Diagnostic Centre cannot be split from the total BNP blood tests performed within the Trust.

**3. How many patients with a suspected diagnosis of heart failure have accessed the local Community Diagnostic Centre between January 2021 to August 2024?**

13 patients.

### **Guidelines**

**1. What guidelines are in place for the local Community Diagnostic Centre to follow in relation to administering BNP and or NT-proBNP tests for patients with a suspected diagnosis of heart failure?**

The Trust follows NICE guidelines which can be found at <https://cks.nice.org.uk/topics/heart-failure-chronic/diagnosis/how-to-assess/>

**2. What referral pathways should be followed by the local Community Diagnostic Centre in relation to patients with a suspected diagnosis of heart failure?**

The Trust has a community heart failure pathway which will be used by the CDC.

### **Targets/metrics**

**1. What assessment has the local Community Diagnostic Centre made of local population need and the likely demand for BNP and/or NT-proBNP testing for patients with a suspected diagnosis of heart failure?**

The Trust has looked at the statistics on local population cardiovascular mortality rates compared to the national average. We have also looked at the patients that currently have pro BNP referred by community and are using this figure to base the business case for NT pro BNP POCT.

**2. Based on local demographics, what assessment has the local Community Diagnostic Centre made of the number of patients with a suspected diagnosis of heart failure that should be seen by the centre on an annual basis?**

Patients requiring an annual review are seen in the community. GP's must refer to the CDC for direct access NT pro BNT and echo. The CDC provides the diagnostic tests, not the treatment.

### **Scaling up**

**3. What assessment has the local Community Diagnostic Centre made of the need to increase access to BNP and/or NT-proBNP testing – including projections of growing need and increases in the number of people at risk of heart failure?**

Currently, the CDC is funded by activity so if demand grows, we can increase workforce to meet the demand.

**4. What assessment has been made of the barriers that may impact the ability of local Community Diagnostic Centres to meet future demands for access to BNP and/or NT-proBNP testing?**

Revenue to pay the workforce is likely to be the major limiting factor and increased estates to house additional staff.

**5. What assessment has been made of additional resources required by local Community Diagnostic Centres to meet rising demand for BNP and/or NT-proBNP testing over the next 12 months; 18 months; and 5 years?**

The Trust has completed an activity profile until end of March 2025. We will be requested to complete an activity profile for 2025/26 within the next few months. We cannot plan beyond 2025/26 until we know whether we will continue to be paid for activity (as per the CDC project and then via the system) or whether this will be on block.

**6. What resource has been allocated to local Community Diagnostic Centres for the acquirement of point of care testing capabilities and administration of BNP and/or NT-proBNP tests?**

There is a traffic per test for POCT and for phlebotomy from which we resource the tests.

If you are not entirely satisfied with this response, please do not hesitate to contact the Information Governance Department via the email address provided. If we do not hear from you within 40 days, we will assume that we have been able to accommodate your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Yours sincerely,



Hazel Hendriksen  
Director of Operations and Performance

**PLEASE NOTE:**

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our decision, you should write to: Information Governance Department, Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust, Suite 9, Buckingham Row, Brick Kiln Lane, Wigan, WN1 1XX.

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision at:

The Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire, SK9 5AF

Helpline number: 0303 123 111