

Information Governance Department

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Brick Kiln Lane

Wigan

WN1 1XX

Email: foi@wwl.nhs.uk

Web: www.wwl.nhs.uk

Ref: FOI/2023/9006

Date Received: 28th June 2023

Response Due: 26th July 2023

Date: 12th July 2023

Dear Sir/Madam

You asked:

This is a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. My request relates to the use of nitrous oxide in healthcare settings.

I would like to request the following information:

- 1. Since 2018 until now, how many complaints have you had about potential excessive exposure to Nitrous Oxide via Entonox and prolonged exposure of staff to high levels of nitrous oxide? Please provide these figures broken down year-by-year eg. 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 so far.**

We do not record data to this level of granularity.

- 2. Have you ever suspended the use of Entonox or any other inhaled as an inhalation analgesic for women in labour in either hospital setting or at home births? If so, please state how many times per year its use has been suspended since the first suspension was recorded.**

We have not suspended the use of Entonox, which is our only inhalation analgesic.

- 3. On average, how long has the use of Entonox been suspended for?**

N/A.

- 4. Have you currently suspended or removed Entonox as an inhalation analgesic for women in Labour in either hospital setting or at home births, or are you planning to in the future?**

No.

5. Do you have ventilation/scavenger units to remove Entonox in your maternity unit? If yes, how old are the ventilation/scavenger systems on the maternity wards and when they last updated/repared?

We have ventilation on our maternity unit. Mechanical ventilation is present in our delivery rooms and our theatre, with other areas (such as our bereavement room, patient bays and assessment rooms) not having mechanical ventilation but having openable windows. Ventilation was implemented in 2002. These have not been updated since.

6. On average, how much exposure do maternity staff have to Entonox in a week and how often do you monitor the levels?

We do not currently measure this, however, we are currently on a waiting list to receive Entonox Exposure equipment, which will then be utilised to monitor exposure levels for our staff.

7. Have you had any staff who have been exposed to Entonox in excess of the Workplace Exposure Limit (WEL) of 100ppm (eight-hour time weighted average) under COSHH Regulations 2002, and what were the levels of exposure?

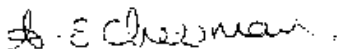
No.

8. Is there currently any legal action involving your staff in relation to this?

No.

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,



Amanda Cheesman
Deputy Chief Nurse

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