

Ref: FOI/2023/8947

Date Received: 5th June 2023

Response Due: 3rd July 2023

Date: 23rd June 2023

Dear Sir/Madam

You asked:

1. Does the Trust impose upfront charges for non-urgent NHS healthcare treatment to overseas visitors, migrants and former UK residents who are ineligible for free healthcare under government guidelines? If not, please explain why, in the context of those guidelines.

If the answer to question 1 is 'no', the Trust need not provide responses to questions 2-8.

The Trust does impose upfront charges for non-urgent NHS healthcare treatment to overseas visitors, migrants and former UK residents who are ineligible for free healthcare under government guidelines.

2. The number of overseas visitors, migrants and former UK residents who were charged upfront for NHS healthcare treatment by the Trust since January 2021 - please note this includes patients who did not subsequently proceed with the treatment

If the answer to question 2 is 'zero', the Trust need not provide responses to questions 3-8.

Zero

3. The total costs charged for the treatments referred to in question 2 (including where the patient did not proceed with the treatment)

4. The number of overseas visitors, migrants and former UK residents who did not proceed with NHS healthcare treatment by the Trust after being quoted an upfront charge (timeframe is since January 2021)

Notes to question 4:

- Sending an invoice to a patient for an upfront charge counts as quoting an upfront charge

- Patients who did not proceed with treatment include those who declined treatment and those who simply did not attend scheduled treatment, as well as any patients who were refused treatment by the Trust

5. Of the number of patients provided in response to question 4, please state how many did not attend scheduled treatment/appointment (rather than cancelling in advance)

Note to question 5:

- If the Trust does not record information in a manner that would enable question 5 to be answered within the section 12 cost limit, please state that the information is 'not held' for this question and process the remainder of this request

If the Trust has not provided information for question 5, or has responded with 'zero', please proceed to question 7.

6. What was the financial loss to the Trust caused by the missed scheduled treatment/appointments referred to in response to question 5?

Note to question 6:

- If the Trust does not record information in a manner that would enable question 6 to be answered within the section 12 cost limit, please state that the information is 'not held' for this question and process the remainder of this request

7. Any data the Trust holds on the reasons for the refusal/inability of the patients referred in response to question 4 to pay the imposed upfront charges (such as preference to return home for treatment, or inability to meet the cost of treatment)

8. Any data the Trust holds on the conditions the patients referred to in response to question 4 wished to be treated for (this may be provided as categories of healthcare, such as ENT and nephrology), or alternatively the treatments that were subject to the imposed charges (these may be grouped into overarching categories for data protection reasons)

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,



Tabitha Gardner
Chief Finance Officer

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