

Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)

Decision notice

Date: 3 July 2025

Public Authority: East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust
Address: Coreys Mill Lane
Stevenage
Hertfordshire
SG1 4AB

Decision (including any steps ordered)

1. The complainant requested information about staffing. The above public authority ("the public authority") provided all the requested information but not within 20 working days.
2. The Commissioner's decision is that the public authority breached section 10 of FOIA because it failed to provide all the requested information within 20 working days.
3. The Commissioner does not require further steps to be taken.

Request and response

4. On 19 November 2024, the complainant wrote to the public authority and requested information in the following terms:

"Please could you provide the following information in relation to Lister Hospital, Stevenage, Hertfordshire:

1. How many full time and part time physician associates work at the hospital,
2. What banding are the physician associates (please provide a breakdown of the numbers per band),

3. How many Clinical nurse Specialists (CNS) work at Lister Hospital (please provide a breakdown of the numbers per band and per service (i.e oncology, liver, renal),
4. How many of those CNSs conduct their own clinics,
5. Of the CNSs, how many are designated as leads of their service and what is the breakdown for each."
5. The public authority responded on 10 January 2025. It stated that it was providing an "incomplete response" and would attempt to provide the remaining information "as soon as possible."
6. The public authority provided an internal review on 10 February 2025. It supplied some additional information, but admitted that this was still incomplete.

Scope of the case

7. Between the complaint being accepted for investigation by the Commissioner and it being allocated to a caseworker, the public authority provided the remaining information.
8. The complainant has confirmed that he is satisfied with the information provided, but not satisfied with the delay. The Commissioner will therefore only consider the procedural handling of the request.

Reasons for decision

9. Section 10 of FOIA requires a public to confirm whether it holds the information that has been requested and to provide any non-exempt information within 20 working days.
10. The public authority failed to provide all the information requested within 20 working days. It therefore breached section 10 of FOIA.

Other matters

11. The Commissioner recognises that when larger organisations receive requests for information held across multiple departments, it can be difficult to compile all the information before the statutory deadline.
12. However, the public authority should have adequate processes in place to manage such requests. These should ensure that missing information is chased up and that, where appropriate, delays are escalated, well in advance of the 20th working day, so that the team tasked with responding has sufficient time to compile the response whilst still meeting the deadline.
13. The public authority should also ensure that all its staff are aware of their responsibilities to help the organisation, as a whole, comply with its obligations under FOIA.

Right of appeal

14. Either party has the right to appeal against this decision notice to the First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights). Information about the appeals process may be obtained from:

First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights)
General Regulatory Chamber
PO Box 11230
Leicester
LE1 8FQ

Tel: 0203 936 8963
Fax: 0870 739 5836

Email: grc@justice.gov.uk

Website: www.justice.gov.uk/tribunals/general-regulatory-chamber

15. If you wish to appeal against a decision notice, you can obtain information on how to appeal along with the relevant forms from the Information Tribunal website.
16. Any Notice of Appeal should be served on the Tribunal within 28 (calendar) days of the date on which this decision notice is sent.

Signed

Roger Cawthorne
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Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF