

Ref. No: 0638
Date: 29/01/24
Subject: Freedom of Information Requests

REQUEST

For the past 12 months or past calendar year:

- 1. How many FOI requests have you received in your organisation?**
- 2. How many of these requests have not been completed within the 20-working day timescale?**
- 3. How many staff log / process FOI requests?**
- 4. What system is used to log and record Freedom of Information Requests? e.g. Ulysses, Excel**
- 5. Please provide the reasons that these requests were not completed within 20 working day timescale? e.g. lack of engagement, delay from departments who have the information, availability of staff, delay in approval process.**
- 6. Do all staff in your organisation have training on what a Freedom of Information Request is?**
- 7. Have you implemented any changes to improve the Freedom of Information Request response rate within your organisation? E.g. staff awareness, invested in better systems, hired more employees.**
- 8. If you have any other comments about responding to FOI requests or completing the requests within 20 working days, please write them here.**

RESPONSE

St Helens and Knowsley Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust and Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust became a single legal entity known as Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust on 1st July 2023, as such parts of the response may be provided in two sections relating to the hospital sites of each of the legacy organisations.

1. How many FOI requests have you received in your organisation?

The Trust received 1,254 requests throughout the previous calendar year (2023).

2. How many of these requests have not been completed within the 20-working day timescale?

The Trust has failed to complete 426 requests within the 20-working day timescale.

3. How many staff log / process FOI requests?

The Trust has a Freedom of Information Officer (0.91 Full Time Equivalent (FTE)) who is responsible for the administration of FOI requests.

4. What system is used to log and record Freedom of Information Requests?

Microsoft Excel

5. Please provide the reasons that these requests were not completed within 20 working day timescale? e.g. lack of engagement, delay from departments who have the information, availability of staff, delay in approval process.

This information is not recorded.

6. Do all staff in your organisation have training on what a Freedom of Information Request is?

All staff are required to undertake mandatory Information Governance training on an annual basis, and the Freedom of Information Act is covered within said training.

7. Have you implemented any changes to improve the Freedom of Information Request response rate within your organisation? E.g. staff awareness, invested in better systems, hired more employees.

A new tracking and logging system is being developed internally. Moreover, the Information Governance Department has met with a number of teams to discuss how the FOI process can be improved.

8. If you have any other comments about responding to FOI requests or completing the requests within 20 working days, please write them here.

N/A