

Date: Friday, 19th June 2020
Our Ref: MB/MB FOI 4361

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Re: Freedom of Information Request FOI 4361

We are writing in response to your request submitted under the Freedom of Information Act, received in this office on 09th June 2020.

Your request was as follows:

This FOI is in relation to sites operating from February 2020 to the present day:

1. Where mental health patients arriving at your Trust's hospital(s) or A&E department(s) are asked to wait before being assessed and whether this is in an area where patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 are.

There is no A&E department within The Walton Centre NHS Foundation Trust (WCFT) therefore any mental health outpatients attending the Trust are planned. Patients would await their appointment in the main outpatient department waiting area. They would not be required to wait in any area with patients with suspected or confirmed cases of covid-19.

2. Are waiting/assessment areas completely separate, with their own access and exit areas and other facilities including but not exclusively toilets?

No, both the waiting area and assessment rooms are utilised by Neurology, Neurosurgery and Neuropsychiatry patients.

3. Are mental health patients given PPE if asked to walk through COVID-19 contaminated areas?

Patients would not be required to walk through contaminated areas unless they themselves were positive for covid-19, in these circumstances PPE would be provided. All patients are also provided with handwashing, temperature checks and masks upon entering the hospital.

4. What is the policy to determine whether an arriving mental health patient should be treated in a COVID-19 zone?

For Neuropsychiatry patients attending outpatient appointments they are informed via telephone and letter prior to attendance they should cancel their appointment if symptomatic. Inpatients would only be treated in a Covid-19 zone if they had tested positive.

5. Are patients arriving given any warning about the increased risk of COVID-19 infection from hospital? What measures are in place for patients who lack capacity to understand and consent to these warnings?

Yes. Patients are advised if they choose to attend an outpatient appointment they may be at increased risk. For

outpatients who lack capacity and contact with Neuropsychiatry has been conducted via telephone and/or video consultation. On admission to the hospital all patients are swabbed for Covid-19. If a patient was required to attend the hospital for neuropsychiatry outpatient appointment and lacked capacity a decision would be made in the patient's best interests with the relevant professionals.

Please see our response above in [blue](#).

Re-Use of Public Sector Information

All information supplied by the Trust in answering a request for information (RFI) under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 will be subject to the terms of the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2005, Statutory Instrument 2005 No. 1515 which came into effect on 1st July 2005.

Under the terms of the Regulations, the Trust will licence the re-use of any or all information supplied if being used in a form and for the purpose other than which it was originally supplied. This license for re-use will be in line with the requirements of the Regulations and the licensing terms and fees as laid down by the Office of Public Sector Information (OPSI). Most licenses will be free; however the Trust reserves the right, in certain circumstances, to charge a fee for the re-use of some information which it deems to be of commercial value.

Further information can be found at www.opsi.gov.uk where a sample license terms and fees can be found with guidance on copyright and publishing notes and a Guide to Best Practice and regulated advice and case studies, at www.opsi.gov.uk/advice/psi-regulations/index.htm

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to the Freedom of Information Office at the address above.

Please remember to quote the reference number, FOI 4361 in any future communications.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioners Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely

Mike Burns

Mr. Mike Burns, Executive Lead for Freedom of Information