

Title

Bed Availability on Cardio Wards At NDDH

Reference Number: RDF1907-23

Date of Response: 18/10/2023

Further to your Freedom of Information Act request, please find the Trust's response(s) below:

Please be aware that the Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (Royal Devon) has existed since 1st April 2022 following the integration of the Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust (known as Northern Services) and the Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust (known as Eastern Services).

[Bed availability in all cardiology wards between 7th and 21st December 2022.](#)

[How many beds were vacant, at any time during the day or night, in every cardiology ward on every day between the dates 7th and 21st December 2022 at the North Devon District Hospital.](#)

The Trust does not hold information on when a bed was available for a new patient during the dates requested. This information is available as a live view to enable the Trust to manage beds across the Trust at any point in time but is not stored and so is not held.

The only data that is held is part of a patient's medical record held within the Electronic Patient Record (EPR). The EPR identifies where a patient is and therefore identifies when a bed is vacant and does not have a patient in it. This can be for several reasons, for instance if a patient is having surgery and will be returning to the ward the bed would show as vacant as the patient is not physically in it.

Having reviewed this data it would not be appropriate to release under FOI as this provides details on patient's movements around the hospital and could be considered personal data so is exempt under Section 40(2) of the FOI Act as it is in breach of Principle 1 of the UK GDPR and would not be lawful or transparent to patients to view their records for this purpose.

The only way to identify if a bed was actually empty and available for a patient to move into would be to go through every patients' medical records to review their movements. To carry out this work would exceed the appropriate cost limit as set out in Section 12 (1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and is therefore exempt.

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 Section 12 (1) and defined in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004, a public authority is not obliged to comply with a request for information if it estimates that the cost of complying would exceed the appropriate limit. The limit of £450 represents the estimated cost of one person spending two and a half days in determining whether the Trust holds the information, locating, retrieving and extracting that information.