

Title: Deaths & Waiting Lists & Times

---

Reference Number: RDF1207-23

Date of Response: 10/02/23

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

*I am writing under the Freedom of Information Act. This is a request of multiple parts. Please treat each part as a separate request.*

*Please provide me with the following information from your trust. In all references to years I am asking for the information from the entire calendar year (January to December inclusive).*

1. PART 1

*The total number of deaths considered more likely than not to have occurred due to problems in care in the trust for each quarter for which records are available*

Answer: Please note that Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust (NDHT) – Northern services and the Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust (RD&E) – Eastern services merged on 1 April 2022 to become the Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.

The information requested is available in The Trust's Annual Quality Account which can be found on the Trust website publications. To assist you we have provided the web links below.

Eastern Services:

<https://www.royaldevon.nhs.uk/media/5nkjgsuf/rd-e-quality-report-2021-22.pdf>  
<https://www.rdehospital.nhs.uk/media/rsno2te1/quality-report-2020-21.pdf>  
<https://www.rdehospital.nhs.uk/media/42yjzxbd/quality-report-2019-20.pdf>  
<https://www.rdehospital.nhs.uk/media/5z0haeqv/annual-report-2018-2019.pdf>  
<https://www.rdehospital.nhs.uk/media/qdhdwp3p/annual-report-2017-2018.pdf>

Northern Services:

<https://www.royaldevon.nhs.uk/media/nihlhddq/ndht-quality-account-2021-22.pdf>  
<https://www.northdevonhealth.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Quality-account-2020-21-FINAL.pdf>  
<https://www.northdevonhealth.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Quality-account-2019-20-APPROVED.pdf>  
<https://www.northdevonhealth.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Quality-account-2018-19.pdf>  
<https://www.northdevonhealth.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Quality-account-2017-18-FINAL.pdf>

2. [PART 2](#)

*The highest number of days of delayed discharge in your trust in 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022*

Answer: The Trust has carefully considered your request. However, it declines to provide the specific details of the information requested under Section 40 (2) of the Freedom of Information Act.

The Trust recognises that whilst the information requested does not itself identify the patient(s), the questions ask for very specific and focused details, and due to the low number of cases involved to provide this detail would create a potential for the patient(s) concerned to be identified and it is likely the Trust would be in breach of the Data Protection Act principles.

The Trust believes that the release of such sensitive information meets the definition of personal data and disclosing the information would contravene one of the data protection principles set out in Article 5 of the UK GDPR. As such release of the information would be likely to cause distress to the individuals concerned

This follows NHS Digital (formerly HSCIC) analysis guidance (2014) which states that small numbers within local authorities, wards, postcode districts, CCG's providers and Trusts may allow identification of patients and should not be published.

3. [PART 3](#)

*The longest waiting time recorded in 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022 for a patient to receive the result of each of the following diagnostic tests*

- a. *Part 3a Magnetic Resonance Imaging test (MRI)*
- b. *Part 3b Echocardiogram*
- c. *Part 3c Non-obstetric ultrasound*

Answer: This information is not held by the Trust.

4. [PART 4](#)

*The longest period of time that a patient spent on a waiting list for a non-urgent operation in 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022. For each year, please also include, if possible, which category of operation is concerned.*

Answer: The information requested is available on NHS England's statistic publication. To assist you we have provided the web links below.

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/rtt-waiting-times/>

5. [PART 5](#)

*The numbers of patients removed from outpatient or elective care waiting lists with a removal reason of death, for 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022.*

Answer: From a mortality perspective, patients that die in our care while on a waiting list are reviewed, however we do not routinely review all deaths of patients that are on waiting lists as part of our routine work because people do not always die from the things they are waiting to be treated for. There are some specialties that complete these types of reviews, however nationally harm reviews were stood down post COVID to permit clinicians to treat rather than audit.

*In **PART 1**, if these numbers are only available for patients who have not been identified as having learning disabilities, that is acceptable. The request is based on this announcement by the Department of Health and Social Care (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/nhs-becomes-first-healthcare-system-in-the-world-to-publish-numbers-of-avoidable-deaths>), and the 'Learning from Deaths Dashboard' template announced by NHS England.*

*In **PART 5**, I recognise that it is not possible to determine the cause of death of the patient. That is not what I am requesting. For all parts of this request, if the data to the end of 2022 is not available, then please include as much of the year as possible.*

*If the trust experienced any merger in the timeframes required, please include if possible the results for the separate defunct trusts before the merger, and then the results for the new trust.*

*Please let me know if you would like to clarify any part of the request.*