

Patient Fat Shaming Complaints

Reference Number: F4657
Date of Response: 15th June 2022

Further to your Freedom of Information Act request, please find the Trust's response, in **blue bold text** below:

Royal Devon's Eastern FOI Office Response

Could you please tell me for the calendar year 2021:

- 1) How many official complaints and PALS concerns your Trust received from patients alleging they had been discriminated against or badly treated by a member of staff because of their being overweight or obese

Please do this by searching for complaints containing any of the words "weight", "fat", "obese", "overweight" and "bariatric" and filtering these to find those that refer to allegedly fat-shaming comments or actions made by a member of staff.

In 2021, the Trust received two complaints and one concern regarding allegations of fat-shaming comments/actions by a member of staff.

- 2) Can you select the first five such complaints from 2021 and provide me with the following details:

- a. What type of staff member was the complaint levelled against? E.g. healthcare assistant, junior doctor, consultant, cleaner, kitchen staff

- 1. Surgeon**
- 2. Surgeon/consultant**
- 3. Dental surgeon**

- b. Please quote the words allegedly used by the hospital staff or summarise the offending action.

- 1. No specific wording given but surgeon would not operate as patient had gained weight**
- 2. No specific wording but patient needed operation and was told to was told to lose weight.**
- 3. No specific wording given but patient needed teeth extraction. When arrived told could not do extraction due to their BMI as they had been put on the wrong list and this needed to be done at the main hospital.**

- c. Please tell me what, if any, action was taken by your trust in response to these five sample complaints from the beginning of 2021.

- 1. Response sent to patient with apology that this was not highlighted to the surgeon in the pre-op**

2. Response sent to patient reiterating that patient had been told they should engage with Exeter Medical Obesity Services to lose weight in readiness for the operation
3. Response sent with apology the patient's weight was not picked up earlier and assurance the patient was not being 'fat shamed'