

Diagnosis of Sciatica at Initial Assessment

Reference Number: RDF2098-23

Date of Response: 18/12/23

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).

For patients with a diagnosis of Sciatica at initial assessment within the RDE Orthopaedics Department service. That have been assessed in the RDE Orthopaedics Department between 1 September 2021 and 31st August 2023.

A. Number of initial assessments in the service with a diagnosis of sciatica.

Answer: The Trust has considered your request, however the Trust does not hold this information in an easily reportable format. While a low number of patients may have a diagnosis code of Sciatica, a patient will present with Sciatica but be diagnosed with something else which is causing the symptom e.g. disc issues, and it will be this diagnosis that is coded.

As such we are unable able to provide a validated report for all patients with Sciatica. As each question relies on the other, the Trust are unable to complete the question set.

To provide you with the information requested would require the manual extraction and manipulation of information from various sources and systems including individual patient records. 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.

In addition, it is not expected and inappropriate for the Trust to review individual patient records to obtain/produce the information. In this instance the Freedom of Information question is exempt under Section 40 (2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (patients personal data). Under FOI regulation reporting organisations have no obligation to create information.

B. Of A, Number of initial assessments that first line treatment is a nerve block injection.

Answer: Please see response to question 1.

C. Of B, No. of initial assessments that have no further nerve block injection or surgery after their first nerve block injection.

Answer: Please see response to question 1.

D. Of B, No. of assessments that go on to have further nerve block injection or surgery after their first nerve block injection.

Answer: Please see response to question 1.