

NHS Safe Places

Reference Number: RDF2176-23

Date of Response: 31/01/24

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).

This is an information request relating to NHS safe house patients. Please include the following information for each of the following financial years; 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23:

- 1. What are the conditions that class as "unsuitable housing" or 'clinically vulnerable' pertaining to patients that require NHS safe places?*

Unsuitable housing leading to the provision of safe houses refers to the conditions that means social services must be called as referred to in this article.

- <https://www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/news/safe-place-patients-who-are-homeless-after-hospital-stay>*

Answer: Please see below.

- Housing is the responsibility of the local authority/council. There are safe places for homeless people, victims of domestic abuse and slavery.
- The Trust has a responsibility under the "Homelessness Reduction Act 2017" to make referrals for housing when there are patients who are in unsuitable housing or at risk of homeless or homeless. This is referenced in Trust policies and on the Trust staff intranet.
- These 'unsuitable conditions' are variable and the information about people's housing comes to the Trust from a number of sources including Paramedics, community nurses, their neighbours, family and sometimes from the patient themselves.
- Clinical staff are trained to support people with vulnerable housing especially from self-neglect, domestic abuse and/or poverty or living at no fixed abode.
- Referrals are made to housing support via Bay6 and social services. Health IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advisor) may refer patients to a refuge or other housing.
- There are services available via social services and voluntary organisations to help those whose homes are unsuitable and need cleaning.
- Salvation Army have been contacted by the Trust e.g. for victims of Modern Slavery.

- Patients who have capacity to understand their situation, may be signposted to support e.g. at Council
- Some patients are discharged to unsuitable housing, no fixed abode or street living because they have the mental capacity to decline referrals, or the housing offered.

2. *How many cases of this have been reported each year?*

Answer: The Trust does not hold information to specify those admitted or discharged due to 'unsuitable housing' or 'clinically vulnerable' in a reportable format, however the Trust does record 'Discharged to no fixed abode'.

The information 'Discharged to no fixed abode' can be accessed via the following link:

- <https://royaldevon.nhs.uk/media/n5zawmi0/foi-rdf2127-23-discharge-of-patients-with-no-fixed-abode.pdf>

This information is exempt under Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act because it is reasonably accessible to you.

All Trust responses to Freedom of Information requests can be found at the following link:

- <https://royaldevon.nhs.uk/about-us/information-governance/freedom-of-information-foi-and-environmental-information-regulations-eir/foi-disclosure-log/>

Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act exempts disclosure of information that is reasonably accessible by other means. The terms of this exemption mean that the Trust does not have to consider whether or not it would be in the public interest for you to have the information.

3. *How many days did each patient stay?*

Answer: The Trust does not hold information to identify 'How many days did each patient stay' due to 'unsuitable housing' or 'clinically vulnerable' in a reportable format. Some patients are kept in hospital after they are medically optimized for discharge to allow for planning and referrals to take effect.

4. *What were the reasons for their stay?*

Answer: Please see the response for question 3, the Trust does not hold this information in a reportable format.

5. *How much did it cost to keep each patient?*

Answer: Please see the response for question 3, the Trust does not hold this information in a reportable format.

6. *What was the reason for each patients' discharge?*

Answer: Please see the response for question 3, the Trust does not hold this information in a reportable format.