

Title

COVID-19 & Discharges into Care homes

Reference Number: F4016
Date of Response: 17/10/23

Request - data for the previously named Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust Response. Data requested – From the start of COVID-19 to the end of May 2021.

1. The number of patients who were positive with Covid-19 who you discharged into care homes since you started recording patients suffering with coronavirus.

This information is not held by the Trust. The Trust did not discharge any care home patient with known infectious COVID to a care home during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Patients who had recovered from COVID were transferred to their care homes, however the Trust followed the testing requirements (introduced in March 2020) prior to transfers.

2. The number of patients who had recovered from Covid-19 who you discharged into care homes since you started recording patients suffering with coronavirus.

Post-Epic data: The Trust's Electronic Record system:

Epic commenced October 2020. Please see table for Trust response to questions 2.

Count	Grand Total
Row Labels	
2020	24
Nov	*<5
Dec	23
2021	34
Jan	20
Feb	9
Mar	*<5

Apr	*<5
May	*<5

Section 40 (2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

*<5 when indicated on the table above, the Trust applies Section 40 (2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

In accordance with Section 40 (2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, we are unable to provide figures where the number of patients is less than or equal to five and could risk the identification of those patients/staff and breach Caldicott principles. In these cases, ≤5 is used to indicate that a figure between 1 and 5 is being suppressed.

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authorities, wards, postcode districts, CCG's providers and Trusts may allow identification of patients and should not be published.

Question 2.

- a. [The care homes these patients were discharged into.](#)
- b. [The dates that these discharges happened](#)

The Trust issues a refusal notice for question 2 a and b of this FOI under Section 17 of the Act. The following exemptions also apply:

Section 12 (1) – Time/Cost (over 18hrs work)

There is no recorded data of the actual Care Homes that the patients were discharged into. There is also no recorded data of the actual date of Transfer to the patients Care home.

To try to identify if the information requested was held by the Trust to answer your questions re Care homes would involve Trust staff having to obtain and then manually look through all patients notes to try to identify if the information was held. This would take over 18 hours. 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.

Section 40 (3a) – Personal Data (Patient)

The Trust would decline to provide the specific details of the information requested (in this case the names of the care homes) under Section 40 (3a) 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.

Pre-Epic data - - from March to October 2020.

The Trust does not hold this information. The Trust does not have any recorded data with care home destination codes that existed at that time.

This does not mean that no patients were transferred into their Care homes. As stated in question 1, any patients transferred would have had the testing requirement (introduced in March 2020) prior to transfers.