

Date: 16 December 2021

Our reference: N/21/3406

Dear Requestor

RE: Freedom of Information Request

With reference to your request for information I can confirm in accordance with Section 1 (1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 that we partially hold the information that you have requested. A response to each part of your request is below.

In the request you asked:

1. What plans are in place towards increasing the number of mental health beds in your locality and within what time frame?

Future plans will be informed by an inpatient demand modelling review for adults and older adults which commences at the end of November 2022. The review will propose options for inpatient and community services.

Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, who the CCG commission mental health inpatient and PICU beds, is scheduled to open a new acute mental health inpatient unit in the spring 2022. The unit will increase the number of acute beds by 14.

2. What is the total number of patients placed out of the area with a mental health diagnosis in the past year to date?

This information can be obtained from Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (NHT). The CCG commissions NHT to provide inpatient and Psychiatric Intensive Care Units. If additional capacity is required, NHT sub contract/spot purchase provision from private providers.

You may wish to request this information from Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (NHT), information on how to submit a Freedom of Information request to NHT can be found on their website via the following link - <https://www.nottinghamshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/c-freedom-of-information>

3. List of private mental health hospital providers which you are currently placing patients in their care?

This information can be obtained from Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.

You may wish to request this information from Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (NHT), information on how to submit a Freedom of Information request to NHT can be found on their website via the following link - <https://www.nottinghamshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/c-freedom-of-information>

4. What Criteria/guidelines do you follow in selecting/commissioning Private transport services providers?

The currently commissioned Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service (NEPTS) was awarded following a procurement exercise.

5. List of Private transport companies/independent ambulance services providers currently commissioned to transport patients to such facilities?

ERS Medical are the only Provider we currently commission.

6. On average how much do you currently pay per trip for patient transportation to such facilities?

In response to question 6, I can confirm that we do hold this information. However, NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire CCG has considered this request and has decided to withhold this requested information pursuant to the exemption in Section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Section 43(2) relates to information that is exempt from disclosure that “would or would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the public authority holding it)”.

The information requested relates to details of commercial arrangements the CCG has in place with independent providers. Information around the financial value of these contracts and services combined with information relating to the service activity is considered to be harmful. This is described as the mosaic and precedent effect.

On this basis, NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire CCG consider that, at this time, the commercial interests of the CCG, third parties and overall the NHS would or would likely be prejudiced.

Public Interest Test

Section 43(2) is a qualified exemption and, therefore, the CCG is required to apply the public interest test.

NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire CCG recognise that the disclosure of the information sought in relation to how much on average the CCG currently pay per trip for patient transportation would promote accountability and transparency in the use of public funds by the CCG and by the NHS in general and also with decision making by the CCG and their transactions with third parties.

Conversely to the factors demonstrated above in favour of disclosure, NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire CCG and third party suppliers could be disadvantaged should the information sought in relation to how much on average the CCG currently pay per trip for patient transportation be made available. Suppliers compete with one another in a competitive environment and to provide data to this level of detail would lead to loss of confidence by suppliers and customers and could cause significant harm to the CCG and suppliers.

The disclosure could also adversely impact on any on-going or future procurement processes for the reasons outlined above. Any disclosure by the CCG could, in future, discourage the provision of commercially sensitive information necessary to respond properly to the CCG's Invitation To Tender, and would be likely to affect and undermine the CCG's bargaining position in any future procurement process or negotiations. Ultimately, civil action could be taken against the CCG

should information be disclosed that adversely affects the commercial interests of current and/or future suppliers.

As a result, it is our opinion that this sufficiently demonstrates the prejudice which could be caused through disclosure.

Balance Test

It is important to bear in mind that any disclosure under the FOI Act is a disclosure to the public at large and not just to the applicant. It is recognised that there is a general public interest in the CCG being open and transparent. However, it is not believed that this public interest is served in disclosure for damage that would be caused as outlined above.

Therefore, the CCG consider that releasing this information would not be in the public interest, as the public interest does not outweigh the prejudice as set out above.

7. Are you currently accepting new firms? What is the typical contract length/agreement with Private transport companies/independent ambulance services?

We are not currently seeking to commission any further Providers of NEPTS during the lifetime of the current contract.

8. What is the total amount spent in the last year to date on patient transportation?

In 2020/21, £7.15m was spent across all Patient Transport Services (PTS) including Non-contract activity (NCAs).

9. Any other comments?

Not applicable.

If you are unhappy with the way in which your request has been handled, NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group have an internal review procedure through which you can raise any concerns you might have. Further details of this procedure can be obtained by contacting Lucy Branson, Associate Director of Governance via lucy.branson@nhs.net or by writing to NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire CCG, Sir John Robinson House, Sir John Robinson Way, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 6DA.

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the internal review, you can apply to the Information Commissioner's Office, who will consider whether the organisation has complied with its obligations under the Act, and can require the organisation to remedy any problems. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group. You can find out more about how to do this, and about the Act in general, on the Information Commissioner's Office website at: <https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/>

Complaints to the Information Commissioner's Office should be sent to: FOI/EIR Complaints Resolution, Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF
Telephone 0303 123 1113 or report a concern: <https://ico.org.uk/concerns/>

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Officer on behalf of *NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group*.

notts.foi@nhs.net

All information we have provided is subject to the provisions of the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015. Accordingly, if the information has been made available for re-use under the [Open Government Licence](#) (OGL) a request to re-use is not required, but the license conditions must be met. You must not re-use any previously unreleased information without having the consent of NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group. Should you wish to re-use previously unreleased information then you must make your request in writing (email will suffice) to the FOI Lead via notts.foi@nhs.net. All requests for re-use will be responded to within 20 working days of receipt.