

Ref no: 222191120
From: Public
Date: 19/11/20
Subject: Data breaches and cyber attacks

REQUEST

I am writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act to request the following information from your IT department.

We are conducting research on the protection of data stored within the public sector and wish to know the following:

- How many cloud data breaches have occurred within your organisation in 2019 and 2020?
- How many cyberattacks have occurred within your organisation in 2019 and 2020?
- How many ransomware attacks have occurred within your organisation in 2019 and 2020?
- How many data loss incidents have occurred as a result of lost or stolen devices storing your organisation's data (such as USB flash drives, Hard Drives, Solid State Drives, mobile phones or laptops) within your organisation in 2019 and 2020?

Please split any data supplied separately for 2019 and 2020.

RESPONSE

The Trust does hold this information, but considers it exempt under section 31 (1) (g) Law Enforcement, where disclosure would be likely to prejudice the exercise by St Helens and Knowsley Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust of its functions.

The Trust recognises that there is public interest in disclosure of information that increases transparency and demonstrates accountability within the NHS as to how cyber incidents may affect NHS Trusts. This has been taken into consideration when making this decision.

There is, however, a strong public interest in protecting confidentiality of patient data and ensuring that healthcare services can be provided to the public without increasing the possibility of attacks by hackers or malware, or putting personal or other information held on these systems at risk of corruption or subject to illegal access. Release of this information risks harming the systems the Trust relies upon on a daily basis.

As such, there is an overwhelming public interest in keeping the Trust's computer systems secure, which would be served by non-disclosure. For this reason the Trust has decided the public interest is to withhold this information.