

Ref. No: 204220721
From: Press
Date: 22/07/21
Subject: Cancer treatment/testing complaints related to the pandemic

REQUEST

Could you please tell me between January 1st 2021 and the date of this email (21st July 2020):

1) How many PALS enquiries and official complaints your Trust has received from patients concerned about

a) the impact of the coronavirus pandemic and your Trust's response on their or their family member's access to cancer treatment

b) and access to cancer testing - including tests to find out whether their or their family member's cancer has spread, returned or occurred for the first time

NOTE: I suggest you search for these complaints by using the keywords 'cancer treatment', 'chemotherapy', 'cancer testing', 'coronavirus', 'COVID-19' and other relevant terms.

2) For the five most recent PALS enquiries/official complaints received, please provide me with

a) a summary of the complaint (e.g. a patient with stage 4 lung and breast cancer has contacted PALS to complain about their chemotherapy being postponed for a month)

b) the exact wording of the complaint, with redactions to remove potentially identifying information

c) what action the Trust took in response

RESPONSE

We are unable to provide precise figures when those figures refer to individuals in volumes of 5 or less due to the risk that individuals will be re-identified, as we are required to protect their identity under the General Data Protection Regulations & Data Protection Act 2018. In such circumstances sections 40(2) and (3) of the Freedom of Information Act apply. In this case, our view is that disclosure would breach the first data protection principle. This states that personal data should be processed “lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner”. It is the lawful aspect of this principle which, in our view, would be breached by disclosure. In such circumstances section 40 confers an absolute exemption on disclosure.