

Ref. No: 095260522  
From: Research  
Date: 26/05/22  
Subject: Breast Cancer Now

## REQUEST

### Re: NHS Trusts provision of Breast reconstruction and balancing surgery

#### Part A- Delayed reconstructive surgery backlog

1. Following the suspension of reconstructive surgery in March 2020 as a result of the pandemic, when was reconstructive surgery restarted within your trust, for:
  - a. Immediate reconstruction?
  - b. delayed reconstructive surgery (*by delayed reconstructive surgery we mean reconstructive surgery that happens after a mastectomy as opposed to immediate reconstructive surgery which occurs concurrently*)?
2. What percentage of patients who have been on the waiting list since March 2020 to May 2022 have had their reconstructive breast surgery, for:
  - a. immediate reconstruction?
  - b. delayed reconstruction?
3. At what proportion of capacity (i.e. average number of patients operated on per month) is the service currently operating at for:
  - a. immediate reconstruction?
  - b. delayed reconstructive surgery?
4. At what capacity (average number of patients operated on per month) was the service operating at pre-pandemic for (January 2019 – January 2020)?
  - a. immediate reconstruction?
  - b. delayed reconstructive surgery?

5. What was the average waiting time for receiving reconstruction in your trust between 2018-2019 (in weeks) for:
  - a) Free- flap reconstruction
    - i. Immediate?
    - ii. Delayed?
  - b) Implant reconstruction
    - i. Immediate?
    - ii. Delayed?
6. What is the current average waiting time for receiving delayed reconstruction in your trust (in weeks) for:
  - a) Free- flap reconstruction
    - i. Immediate?
    - ii. Delayed?
  - b) Implant reconstruction
    - i. Immediate?
    - ii. Delayed?
7. What is the current average wait time for additional surgeries (i.e. balancing and correction surgeries) in your trust?

**Part B- Reconstructive and balancing breast surgery- procedural limits**

1. Does your trust operate under any policies or guidance which place limitations on the number of reconstructive surgical procedures a breast cancer patient is able to access, including limiting the number of balancing surgeries (procedures to the unaffected breast to ensure it matches the reconstructed breast)?

There is no policy or guidance limiting number of procedures.

- a) If so, could you please provide details of the limitations and how long they have been in place?

**Part C- Reconstructive and balancing breast surgery- time limits**

1. Does your trust operate under any policies or guidance which place limitations on the timescale for surgical procedures a breast cancer patient is able to access, including for balancing surgeries?

There is no policy or guidance limiting timescales for procedures.

a) If so, could you please provide details of the policy and how long it has been in place?

## RESPONSE

### Section 12 - cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit

Under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act, St Helens & Knowsley Teaching Hospitals Trust does not have to comply with a request where it estimates the cost of complying would exceed the appropriate limit of £450. The appropriate limit has been specified within the regulations and represents the estimated cost of one person spending 2½ working days in answering the question.