
Managing requests for information

Staff training

Our staff have been trained in both the Freedom of Information (FOI) and the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR). The Trust has organised Awareness sessions for staff and staff have access to guidance about requests. Requests under both acts are managed by the Trust's Data Awareness Manager (see contact details below), who can also provide advice for requesters and staff.

Who will be asked for information?

Any member of staff can be asked for information at any time. Many of these will be 'usual requests for information' that the member of staff will handle as they always have done. Our staff will always try to be helpful and to pass on any appropriate information promptly within the 20 working day target.

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, it is not suggested that every request is referred to the Data Awareness Manager. See below for those requests that need to be referred.

Press enquiries should be made or forwarded to the PR & Communications Department :

Tel: 01223 2744 33

press@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

When is a request a 'Freedom of Information or Environmental Information Regulations request'?

Staff will ask themselves the following questions and if the answer is 'yes' to any of them, they will refer the request to the Trust's Data Awareness Manager.

1. Does the request mention the Freedom of Information Act or Environmental Information Regulations?
2. Is this a request that I would not normally deal with?

3. Is the request about another individual?
4. Does the request contain confidential information or sensitive information?
5. Do I want to check if there is an exemption clause?
6. Is it an unusual or complex request that I am not sure how to deal with?

Will the requester know about the Acts or need to quote them?

The person requesting the information doesn't need to say it is 'under' the Freedom of Information Act or Environmental Information Regulations Act or even know about either Act. Most people will just want answers to questions.

What is expected of members of staff?

When a member of staff is asked for information, they will either:

- complete the request 'as usual'
or
- if they think the request might be subject to either Act, they will let the requester know what will happen next and the member of staff will refer the request to the Trust's Data Awareness Manager. It is helpful if the staff member explains a little to the requester about the Acts and provides pointers to further information. We have links to information on our website and The Patient Advice and Liaison Service in the Information Centre can also help requesters.

What will happen if the staff member thinks the request is subject to either Act?

The staff member might need to ask the Data Awareness Manager for advice before the request can be processed.

If the staff member is sure that the request is subject to either Act, they will contact the Data Awareness manager, who will log the request to ensure that we reply within the appropriate time periods. This will either be to complete the request without charge (within 20 days) or to explain why there might be a charge or why we can't complete the request (because of exemptions under the Acts).