

Our ref: CB/SF/ajb/20091217 FOI560 Taylor
Your ref:
Date: 17 December 2009

Please reply to:
Lockton House
Clarendon Road
Cambridge
CB2 8FH

Richard Taylor
Cambridge

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By email to: request-23527-cf5e645b@whatdotheyknow.com

Dear Mr Taylor

Freedom of Information Act Request

I write further to your Freedom of Information request which we acknowledged on 23 November 2009, regarding the performance of our Exceptional Case Panel.

The PCT has had 3,177 exceptional case requests in the time period you specify. Some of these are not discussed at panel because a decision is reached before panel, because the applicant is unable to make a case for exceptionality, or because the case subsequently falls into a different category such as a high cost drugs request or a routine commissioning request.

We hold some information pertaining to exceptional case requests on a secure database, but much of the information that you have requested (including panel dates and urgency categories) is contained in individual case files, and not on the database. We are therefore unable to answer your request without a significant amount of case review and to undertake this would be above the fee limit of £450 recommended by the Information Commissioners Guidance and in line with our FOI Policy.

Even given this case review we would not be in a position to release any information that could be patient identifiable and the Data Protection Act would apply under Section 40 (1) of the Freedom of Information Act.

We are seeking to develop the database to enable us to monitor some of the types of information you have requested such as response times by urgency category. When this development takes place we will enter data prospectively. There is no plan at present to link the timing of expenditure into the database, as due to the nature of requests the activity is funded through several funding routes and not exclusively through the exceptional case budget.

I hope this helps explain the situation. I am sorry we are unable to answer your request in detail, but if you would like any further assistance in relation to this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

If you are not satisfied with my response you can contact the Information Commissioner's Office. More details are available on their web-site on www.ico.gov.uk<<http://www.ico.gov.uk/>>. The address is:-

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Banks". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'C'.

CHRIS BANKS
Chief Executive