

24th December 2009

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Dear 

Request under Freedom of Information Act 2000

Request Ref: NGFOI 09/10: 221

Response Letter – over the fees limit – need to reformulate request

Thank you for your request for information received at Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust (NGH) on 27th November 2009.

You were requesting information regarding staff bonuses and expenses claims.

I am pleased that we are now able to provide you with a response to your request as shown below.

Response from Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust (NGH):

Further to your request for information I can confirm, as required by the Freedom of Information Act 2000, that we hold much of the information you have asked for.

Exemption of some information under Section 21 – Information Accessible by Other Means

Some of the information you have requested, such as that relating to bonus payments for senior members of staff is already in the public domain and as such is exemption from disclosure to you under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 because the exemption available to us under S.21 is engaged. This exemption does not require us to consider the application of the public interest test. The information on the Salaries and Pension Entitlements of Senior Managers can be found in the Annual Report and Accounts for the Trust for the last three years on the Trust Website at the following Link: http://www.northamptongeneral.nhs.uk/AboutUs_Reports.aspx

Over the Fees Limit

Much of the remainder of the information which you have requested is held in different systems within our organisation and is not gathered in a context or format which is relevant to your request. Some of the information you request is held by our payroll contractor, as expenses are paid through the payroll system. The contractor advises us that when the expenses processing system was set up it was on the basis that expense claims would be received, processed to payment, filed and

rarely referred to again. We are also advised that more than one payroll system has been used in the period in question.

This means that to find it and collate it in the way in which you have requested would involve in many cases manual searches of hundreds of personnel and financial files, so much work that the cost limit of £450.00 established by S.12 of the Act would be exceeded. Because of this we would ask that you kindly consider whether you are able to refine the depth and breadth of your request to a level which might allow us to respond positively to it. One of the particular areas on which we would appreciate some assistance and refinement relates to your request about the expenses of all Trust staff, where it would be of assistance to know what information would be of most use to you.

Reformulating your request

If you narrow the scope of your request, the Trust may be able to provide the information free of charge as it may cost less than the appropriate limit to do so. We would expect to be able to provide high level financial information about the level of expenses claimed for example cars, travel subsistence etc within the £450 limit.

Any reformulated request the Trust receives from you will be treated as a new FOI request.

We would be grateful if you could let us know as soon as possible whether you would be willing and happy to refine your request to receive the high level information that we expect to be able to provide within the £450 limit as indicated above. Should you not feel able to do so we will regrettably have to refuse your request for information engaging S.12 in due course.

We hope that you will find the information provided helpful. We also hope that you will be satisfied with the manner in which we have dealt with your Freedom of Information request. If not, please do let me know or you may ask for an independent internal review under the Freedom of Information complaints procedure at Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust. Please see the attached leaflet.

If you remain dissatisfied after the internal review, you may make an approach to the Information Commissioner as outlined in the attached leaflet.

If there is anything you need clarification on, please do not hesitate to contact me. Please quote the request reference number NGFOI 09/10: 221 in any future communications.

Yours sincerely,

Charlotte Walker

**Information Governance Assistant
Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust**

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