

**Corporate Affairs Directorate**

Freedom of Information Officer  
Old Nurses Home  
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Southampton General Hospital  
Tremona Road  
Southampton  
SO16 6YD

Tel: 023 8120 5079

**To:** David Woods (via email only)  
[request-664370-ecddbc44@whatdotheyknow.com]

**Ref:** Freedom of Information Request

**Our Ref:** FOI 6734

**Date:** 12<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear David,

I am writing in response to your email dated 11<sup>th</sup> May 2020 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) regarding profitability of private patients.

- Q1
1. *Have the authority implemented service line management, as a tool for measuring the financial performance of each clinical (and possibly other) service within the organisation?*
  2. *Do the authority measure the profitability of private patient services provided by the authority?*
  3. *Which of the following costs are included in measurements of net profitability of private patients?*
    - a. *Costs of staff directly involved in private patients*
    - b. *Prostheses, devices and drugs used by private patients*
    - c. *An allocation for clinical facilities and staff which are not used exclusively for private patients, including:*
      - i. *operating theatres/ theatre staff;*
      - ii. *diagnostic imaging equipment and staff*
      - iii. *Pathology laboratory equipment and staff*
      - iv. *Pharmacy equipment and staff*
      - v. *Therapy equipment and staff*
      - vi. *Critical care, intensive care, and high dependency units*
    - d. *An allocation for overhead costs and staff who provide services to private patients, including:*
      - i. *Information technology equipment and staff*
      - ii. *Human resources staff*
      - iii. *Finance staff*
      - iv. *Estates and facilities management staff*
      - e. *An allocation of costs for the space occupied by private patient services*
  4. *Do the authority measure the net profitability of each payer group, specifically, do the authority measure the net profitability of private patients funded by the following payers:*

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- a. *International patients*
- b. *Self-funded patients*
- c. *BUPA insured patients*
- d. *AXA/ PPP insured patients*
- e. *Aviva insured patients*
- f. *Vitality insured patients*
- g. *Other privately insured patients*
- h. *Any other groups (please specify)*
5. *Do the board of the authority recognise that an NHS organisation should never subsidise private care with public money, and that to do so would be a breach of core NHS principles?*
6. *Which of the following best describes how the board interpret their responsibility to ensure that private care should never be subsidised with public money:*
  - a. *Private care should overall make a gross contribution before the allocation of costs in groups 3d. and 3e. above*
  - b. *Private care should overall make a net profit after the allocation of all costs in 3. Above*
  - c. *Each payer group (as defined in 4 above) should make a net profit after the allocation of costs defined in 3 above.*
  - d. *Each patient/ procedure should make a profit after the allocation of costs (sometimes referred to as patient level information costing systems or PLICS)*
  - e. *Other – please describe*
7. *If they are not considered commercially confidential, please provide an analysis of the profitability of the authority's private patient activity for the years end March 2018, March 2019 and March 2020.*

**A1**

**We can neither confirm nor deny that the information requested is held. As you know, the Trust, along with the rest of the nation, is in the middle of a major national health emergency. There are low numbers of staff able to deal with your request due to sickness and isolation and those that are at work are devoting their attention to the management of urgent frontline care. Our priority at this time is the health and safety of the public and thus your request is at this time being exempted by virtue of s.38 FOIA ; *Health and Safety* as we cannot justify taking staff away from those vital public health tasks**

**You are of course very welcome to re-submit your request at a more suitable time in the future. It is difficult to say when an ideal time might be but realistically I would say no earlier than a couple of months time.**

**If you have made this same request to other Trusts we would strongly suggest that you consider writing to them to withdraw it. Staff at those other Trusts are at the moment immensely overwhelmed and making huge sacrifices and if any of them do feel under pressure to divert attention towards answering your request it will be at the expense of vital services**

**Thank you for understanding and again, our apologies for not being able to accommodate your request at this time.**

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This letter confirms the completion of this request. A log of this request will be held on a database held by the Trust.

With regards,

**Freedom of Information Officer**

University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust

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