

Please ask for: Communications Dept  
Telephone: 01302 647009  
Fax: 01302 320098  
E-mail: communications.dbh@dbh.nhs.uk

Our Ref: FOI/113/2013

**17 June 2013**

Mr Paul Ogden  
Whatdotheyknow.com

Dear Mr Ogden

**Re: Request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000**

Thank you for your request for information:

Please find the Trust's response below

I am undertaking a study on the numbers of Public Health/Welfare Funerals undertaken by NHS Trusts. I would appreciate it if you would provide answers to the following FOI request.

1. The total number of public health funerals (where the deceased has no relatives or there is no one else willing to pay) that your Trust has undertaken for the financial years 2010/11, 2011/12, 2012/13?

RESPONSE: 2010/11 = 8, 2011/12 = 6, 2012/13 = 5

2. The number of public health funerals that your Trust has undertaken by gender for the past 3 financial years?

RESPONSE: The number of female funerals that have taken place is very low, and the individuals may be identifiable. Therefore we are unable to provide the figures for this question.

3. The number of public health funerals that your Trust has undertaken by age for the past 3 financial years? Since April 2010, how many cases have there been where family and friends refuse to finance or make arrangements for their relatives funeral?

RESPONSE:

31-40 = One

41-50 = Four

51-60 = Three

61-70 = Six

71-80 = One

81+ = Two

Unknown = Two

4. How much have the burials/cremations cost the Trust broken down by year for the last three financial years? This cost information does not need to include administrative or staff costs, and before any costs are claimed back by the local authority from the deceased's estate

RESPONSE: 2010/11 = £10,200, 2011/12 = £5,200, 2012/13 = £11,500

NB: These figures are the total spend per annum as charged in the Trust's accounts, and are net of any monies received from bank accounts, insurance policies etc. It is quite feasible that some or all of the cost of a death in say 2011/12 will be reflected in the figures for 2012/13 (hence the large increase between the two years).

5. How much does your trust typically (average cost) pay for a Public Health Funeral?

RESPONSE: £1,650

6. What does your Trust provide at a Public Health Funeral?

RESPONSE: Basic cremation (coffin service).

7. What relationship do you have with your local council(s) regarding funerals of this nature?

RESPONSE: The local council undertakes house clearances and sends the Trust any paperwork re bank accounts, Will or insurance policies, or valuables, ie. jewellery/money they find. The Trust then endeavours to establish if the deceased had any way of reimbursing us the funeral costs. The council also sends any monies received for the sale of white goods/furniture etc from the deceased's home.

8. Have you observed any of the following over the last three years?

- Higher numbers of people dying without any income or assets - NO
- Higher numbers of people dying with family or friends unable to contribute to the costs of a funeral - NO
- Higher numbers of people dying with family or friends unwilling to contribute to the costs of a funeral - NO
- Higher numbers of people dying with no friends or family - NO

The Communications Department facilitates the FOI process on behalf of the Trust, however the source data itself (the Trust's response) is obtained from many internal Trust departments and resources. If there is anything you need further clarification on, or if you have any issues with the Trust's response, then please direct your questions through the Communications Office in the first instance. Thank you.

Yours sincerely

Heather Akroyd  
FOI Co-ordinator

#### Complaints

If you are dissatisfied with our response, you do have the right to complain and to ask for an internal review. The complaint has to be addressed to the Trust in the first instance, where it will be investigated within the timescales set out in the FOIA. If you still feel unhappy, you do have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner. We will provide you with the contact details if you ask us to.

#### Copyright & Public Sector Reuse Regulations:

Information released is subject to Trust Copyright. Information released may also be subject to 'the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2005' under Statutory Instrument 2005 No. 1515. Please contact the Communications Office if you wish to re-use any data provided.

Further information on the FOI Act can also be obtained from:

The Department for Constitutional Affairs: <http://www.dca.gov.uk/>

The Office of the Information Commissioner: <http://www.ico.gov.uk/>

The Campaign for Freedom of Information: <http://www.cfoi.org.uk/>

Our Website Publication Scheme on: <http://www.dbh.nhs.uk/>

FOI Code: 113/2013

17 June 2013