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Ms K Tylko-Hill  
[request-185369-  
9a311250@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-185369-9a311250@whatdotheyknow.com)

9 July 2014

Dear Ms Tylko-Hill

**IR\_131118\_63**

I am writing with regards to your complaint which was received by the Trust on 28 February 2014. Your request was dealt with in accordance with the Trust's policy on handling complaints and the section 45 Code of Practice issued under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I am sorry that it has been necessary to write to the Trust about this matter and that, on this occasion, we failed to respond within the statutory deadline. I also apologise for the time it has taken me to respond.

You originally contacted the Trust by email on 17 November 2013 and an acknowledgement was sent to you on 18 November 2013. The due date for the response was calculated as 16 December 2013, based on a received date of 18 November. I understand that this was incorrect and the due date should have been calculated from 17 November, which is when the email was received at the Trust; this would have made the due date the 13 December 2013. I must apologise for this oversight and can assure you that all new requests are now logged for the day of receipt and the deadline calculated in accordance with the guidance issued by the Information Commissioner.

**Details of your request**

**OUTPATIENT HYSTEROSCOPY/BIOPSY – PAIN CONTROL AND PATIENT CHOICE**

- 1. The current patient information leaflet**
- 2. The current consent form**
- 3. The current surgical protocol**
- 4. Does the leaflet advise the patient to ask her GP to prescribe gynae-specific painkillers to be taken BEFORE the procedure - Y/N?**
- 5. What type and dose of painkillers does your Trust advise patients to take before the**

procedure?

**6. Are ALL your hysteroscopy/biopsy patients given the following choices BEFORE the procedure is attempted:**

- a) General Anaesthesia – Y/N?**
- b) spinal anaesthesia – Y/N?**
- c) conscious sedation – Y/N?**

**7. For each of the last 3 financial years, how many of your hysteroscopy/biopsy patients had**

- a) GA with overnight stay?**
- b) GA day-case ?**
- c) spinal anaesthesia?**
- d) conscious sedation?**
- e) local anaesthetic?**
- f) no anaesthetic?**

**8. What width hysteroscopes do you use? Rigid or flexible?**

**9. For each of the last 3 financial years what % patients DNA outpatient hysteroscopy/biopsy?**

**10. For each of the last 3 financial years what % OP hysteroscopy/biopsy patients had a failed procedure that had to be repeated with epidural, GA or conscious sedation?**

**11. All audits of adverse events, e.g. infection, perforation during the last 3 financial years**

**12. All surveys of patients' experiences during the last 3 financial years**

I understand that you sent an email to the Trust on 10 January 2014, but failed to receive any acknowledgement or response to this. I can only apologise that this did not happen. On 28 February you sent your formal complaint, the details of which are below.

**Details of your complaint**

**Please pass this on to the person who conducts Freedom of Information reviews.**

**I am writing to request an internal review of Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust's handling of my FOI request 'Outpatient Hysteroscopy/Biopsy - Pain control and Patient Choice'.**

**My request was made on 17 November. I've not received a response.**

Following the Trust's acknowledgement email, you sent a further email requesting that any information that had already been gathered be sent to you to be included as part of a survey, to be sent to the Department of Health. At that point, as your complaint had already been logged and your request was still being processed, it was not deemed appropriate to respond

further. It was felt to be in your interest to wait until all the information had been collated before sending it to you.

With regards to the detail of your request, on the face of it it seems straightforward in that is asking about the Trust's hysteroscopy service and the care that patients receive. Your request was initially passed to Women's & Sexual Health, and Risk Teams. In the Women's Team most of the request, relating to procedure, needed to be answered at clinician level which naturally meant the relevant individuals responding when they had time spare from treating patients. I understand the Risk Team subsequently passed the request to the Clinical Effectiveness Team with regards to the audit question. On reaching them the request was then passed to other clinicians from whom it was finally ascertained that no audits in this area had been carried out. In the meantime a search was being undertaken to identify and locate the relevant documentation.

While I said your request was straightforward, the Trust operates off two main sites at University Hospital Lewisham and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Woolwich, and it was necessary to check with professionals at both. I must add that Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust was only created on 01 October 2013 following the merger of Lewisham Healthcare NHS Trust and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH), formerly part of South London Healthcare NHS Trust. At the time of your request the Trust was going through a process of integration which meant that information and documentation which would have been expected to have been readily available, was being reviewed and updated, and staff were familiarising themselves with the new organisation.

I understand that the response was sent to you on 06 March 2014 and that in total it took 75 days for us to process it and respond to you. I am sorry that it took so long. Clearly any breach of legislation is a serious matter, and we are reviewing our processes and taking steps to improve performance. As the new organisation settles down we are able to improve the way the Trust deals with Freedom of Information requests so that the correct staff are identified in a timely manner and all relevant information can be easily located.

If you have any other questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

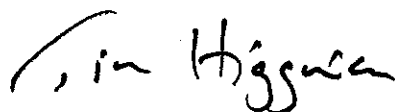
If you remain unhappy following this response, you may contact the:

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

Website: <http://www.ico.org.uk/>

Helpline: 0303 123 1113

Yours sincerely



Tim Higginson  
**Chief Executive**