

Tuesday, 08 June 2010

Dear Mr Ogden

FOI 434- Request regarding public health funerals

Thank you for your recent Freedom of Information request on the above subject. We have completed our search for information and the details are as follows. Your request included:

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 between 2007 and 2010.

Please note that the figures for Babies and Non Viable Foetus (NVF) are not representative of cases where no relatives can be traced. The Trusts offers to take care of funeral arrangements as a matter of routine in these cases.

Period	Adults	Babies	NVF
2009/2010	25	31	67
2008/2009	30	38	71
2007/2008	36	22	85
Total	91	91	223

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

Period	Adults		Babies		NVF
	M	F	M	F	
2009/2010	19	6	23	8	The gender of
2008/2009	20	10	24	14	Non Viable Foetus
2007/2008	21	15	10	12	are indeterminate
Total	60	31	57	34	

3. The number of public health funerals that your authority has undertaken by age for the past 3 financial years

Please see the table below for a breakdown of public health funerals undertaken by age group and year. Only adults have been represented in the table as all babies and NVF are under the age of 1.

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	Adult age groups								
Year	18/39	40/49	50/59	60/69	70/74	75/79	80/84	85/89	90+
09/10	1		4	4	3	4	4	3	2
08/09		2	5	8	2	8	2	3	
07/08	1	2	3	4	5	8	6	6	1
Total	2	4	12	16	10	20	12	12	3

4. Since April 2009, how many cases have there been where family and friends refuse to finance or make arrangements for their relatives funeral?

Of the 25 adult funerals arranged by the hospital 2009/2010 there were 4 cases where relatives declined to be involved. Of the other cases, 10 had no relatives; 2 had families abroad; 3 had relatives who were unable to be contacted because of lack of information; 6 had relatives involved but were unable to provide full finance.

5. How much have the burials/cremations cost the trust broken down by year for the last three financial years?

This is the cost after money has been recouped from bank; building society; DWP etc.

Period	Cost
2009/2010	£7779-47
2008/2009	£7291-62
2007/2008	£6886-35
Total	21957-44

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

Cost of a Cremation	£974-50
Cost of a Burial	£1075-50

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

For cremation, at the local crematorium, there is an option for the ashes to be scattered; buried; collected.

Burials are arranged if it is known there are relatives for the deceased but no contact has been able to be made. In this case the burial is in a public grave. There is a hearse only provided, and the service is conducted by a member of the hospital chaplaincy. There is no restriction on the number of attendees, and viewing arrangements are available if required.

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

When deaths occur in the hospital, and no relatives can be traced it is the Trusts responsibility to make funeral arrangements. The local council provide this arrangement for anyone in similar circumstances dying in the community. Where the local council is holding Court of Protection for someone dying in the hospital the local council will also be holding the individuals finances. In this case the hospital may arrange a funeral and recoup the finance from the council, or the council may

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choose to collect the death certificate and deal with the funeral. In very rare cases there may be relatives or finance for a funeral but there is a refusal to pay. If the Trust declines to finance the funeral then the local council will take over the funeral arrangements.

The Trust is regarding this response as a full and complete discharge of its responsibilities under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in relation to this request.

I trust it fulfils your requirements but should you have any concerns please do not hesitate to contact me and I will attempt to resolve your issues.

Yours sincerely

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