



**The Clatterbridge
Cancer Centre**
NHS Foundation Trust

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Date: 28 August 2020

Re: Freedom of Information Request
Ref: 172-2020

Thank you for your email dated the 31st July 2020, requesting information in relation to PALS enquiries and official complaints.

The information that you require is as follows:

Could you please tell me between 1st March 2020 and the date of this email (31st July 2020):

1) How many PALS enquiries and official complaints your Trust has received from patients concerned about

a) the impact of the coronavirus pandemic and your Trust's response on their access to cancer treatment

Our Trust has received 6 PALS concerns and 5 formal complaints during this period.

b) and access to cancer testing - including tests to find out whether their cancer has spread, returned or occurred for the first time

Our Trust has not received any PALS enquires or official complaints during this period.

NOTE: I suggest you search for these complaints by using the keywords 'cancer treatment', 'chemotherapy', 'cancer testing', 'coronavirus', 'COVID-19' and other relevant terms.

2) For the five most recent PALS enquiries/official complaints received, please provide me with

a) a summary of the complaint (e.g. a patient with stage 4 lung and breast cancer has contacted PALS to complain about their chemotherapy being indefinitely suspended)

b) the exact wording of the complaint, with redactions to remove potentially identifying information

c) what action the Trust took in response

Five most recent contacts

Summary of Concern/Complaint	Exact wording of concern/complaint	Trust action
A patients` treatment was deferred due to Covid 19 risks.	Husband of patient called with a concern that his wife's treatment has been deferred due to COVID-19 pandemic. Wife was present on the call and gave consent to discuss.	PALS referred them to the CCC COVID-19 helpline as they will be able to offer clinical advice as to why treatment can be delayed for that amount of time. Husband and wife are happy to contact the Helpline.
Concerned about a delay in next treatment.	Patient is concerned as she has not received an appointment for her Zoledronate injection. Last appointment in April, was cancelled due to COVID 19.	Appropriate team contacted the patient the same day and made an appointment for treatment

<p>Patient had gone through 1st and 2nd line chemotherapy and was due to start 3rd line treatment when the pandemic began and risk vs benefit decisions were taken around continued chemotherapy.</p>	<p>Patient is concerned that her chemotherapy treatment has not been started and is on hold due to COVID-19.</p>	<p>Reviewed by patients consultant – patient had been kept fully informed, and had agreed with, the reasons for pausing 3rd line chemotherapy in light of COVID- 19. Following PALS concern Consultant had a further discussion with consultant oncological colleagues and despite no change in guidance regarding the situation of COVID and chemotherapy, rang the patient and offered her 3rd line chemotherapy with her fully understanding the potential risks including increased risk of mortality. Patient was happy with this plan.</p>
<p>Patient would like to challenge the decision made by the Trust and NHSE not to provide Abiraterone as a first line treatment during the covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Patient has prostate cancer.</p>	<p><u>Exempt Under Section 40: Personal Information</u></p> <p>The Trust can confirm it holds this information however, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 the Trust is unable to release the information requested. By providing this level of detail, even with redactions, increases, the ‘potential’ risk of this data becoming identifiable information and thereby contravening one or more of the Data Protection Principles by releasing it into the public domain. Confidentiality is expected in such matters. This information is therefore exempt under Section 40 (2): Personal Information, of the Freedom of Information Act 2000</p>	<p>Discussed with Trust Medical Director, Associate Director of Corporate Governance, Quality Manager (NHSE & I) Clinical Oncologist, Chief Pharmacist, Deputy Chief Pharmacist, Private Clinic Manager and Head of Risk and Compliance. Patient met with the Lead for the Urology Site Reference Group. Patient has been</p>

		<p>given all information related to this decision being made by NICE and information on how to appeal the decision to the CCG.</p>
<p>Patient making a complaint about not being offered immunotherapy as a second line treatment option.</p>	<p><u>Exempt Under Section 40: Personal Information</u></p> <p>The Trust can confirm it holds this information however, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 the Trust is unable to release the information requested. By providing this level of detail, even with redactions, increases, the 'potential' risk of this data becoming identifiable information and thereby contravening one or more of the Data Protection Principles by releasing it into the public domain. Confidentiality is expected in such matters. This information is therefore exempt under Section 40 (2): Personal Information, of the Freedom of Information Act 2000</p>	<p>A full review of the complaint was completed but the complaint was not upheld.</p> <p>The Trust contacted both The Christie Hospital and The Royal Marsden Hospital and requested a second opinion on behalf of the patient.</p> <p>An urgent MRI scan was requested and the patient attended the face to face meeting with the consultant where clinical trials were discussed.</p> <p>The Trust is currently reviewing the use of video calling for patients alongside telephone consultations.</p>

Should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me on the email address provided below.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for this to be investigated internally.

If you are dissatisfied with the information you have received, you have the right to ask for an internal review.

Both processes will be handled in accordance with our Trust's Freedom of Information Policy and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Internal investigation and internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to: Freedom of Information Review, The Clatterbridge Cancer Centre NHS Foundation Trust, Clatterbridge Road, Bebington, Wirral, CH63 4JY

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the internal investigation/review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.