

Information Governance

Robert Dolan House
9 Alie Street
London
E1 8DE

Email elft.foi@nhs.net

Website: <https://www.elft.nhs.uk>

13 February 2024

Our reference: FOI DA5208

I am responding to your request for information received 9 February 2024. This has been treated as a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I am now enclosing a response which is attached to the end of this letter. Please do not hesitate to contact me on the contact details above if you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely,

Information Rights Coordinator

If you are dissatisfied with the Trust's response to your FOIA request then you should contact us and we will arrange for an internal review of this decision.

If you remain dissatisfied with the decision following our response to your complaint, you may write to the Information Commissioner for a decision under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

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

Tel: 0303 123 1113
Web: www.ico.org.uk

Please note that the data supplied is not allowed to be re-used and/or published without the explicit consent of East London NHS Foundation Trust. Please contact the signatory to request permission if this is your intention



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Interim Chief Executive Officer: Lorraine Sunduza
Chair: Eileen Taylor

Request: I am writing to request your assistance with an open government request relating to your joint infection services according to the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Question 1: In 2022/2023 (or for the last recorded year with data available), in your Trust/Health Board, how many of the following did you record?
a) Paediatric patients with suspected septic arthritis in native joints
b) Paediatric patients with suspected prosthetic joint infection (PJI)
c) Adult patients with suspected septic arthritis in native joints
d) Adult patients with suspected prosthetic joint infection (PJI)

Answer: The Trust has reviewed question 1 of your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000.

Section 1(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 states:

Any person making a request for information to a public authority is entitled—
(a) to be informed in writing by the public authority whether it holds information of the description specified in the request, and
(b) if that is the case, to have that information communicated to them.

East London NHS Foundation Trust is primarily a Mental Health and Community Health Trust and as such does not diagnose joint infections as described in this request. We are therefore unable to provide a response.

Question 2: Does your Trust/Health Board follow or have any locally developed/adapted guidelines for the diagnosis and treatment of septic arthritis in native joints and prosthetic joint infections in both adults and paediatric patients?
a) If yes, please state which guidelines have been adapted and please provide a copy of your local guidelines

Answer: The Trust has reviewed question 2 of your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000.

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Question 3: When investigating suspected septic arthritis in native joints in both paediatric and adult patients, is a synovial fluid sample collected before or after antibiotics are administered and commenced?
a) Is joint aspirate collected in ED/triage, Assessment unit, inpatient ward, or theatre?
b) Who typically performs the procedure and collects the sample? (Please specify job role)?
c) Does the above differ for suspected prosthetic joint infections? If yes, please clarify how this differs?

Answer: The Trust has reviewed question 3 of your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000.

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Question 4: What clinician would typically manage paediatric patients with suspected septic arthritis in native joints? (please select one or multiple)?
I. Paediatric Consultant
II. Orthopaedic Consultant
III. Infectious Diseases Consultant
IV. Other (please specify)

Answer: The Trust has reviewed question 4 of your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000.

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Question 5: Are patients discharged before culture results from synovial fluid aspirate are received? If yes, what requirements need to be met before patients are discharged?

Answer: The Trust has reviewed question 5 of your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000.

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Question 6: For adult and paediatric patients with suspected septic arthritis of native joints, what are the mean turnaround times (in hours, or if more appropriate, working days) for results on the following tests from receipt of specimen: (please provide an answer for each result)
a) Gram Stain
b) Culture
c) Blood culture
d) White blood cell count

Answer: The Trust has reviewed question 6 of your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000.



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Question 7: Does your Trust/Health Board conduct PCR testing of bacteria from synovial fluid of patients who have suspected septic arthritis of native joints?

If yes:

- a) Is this testing conducted on site?**
- b) At what point is testing requested – when the culture is negative or on request?**
- d) How long is the average turnaround time for results from receipt of specimen?**
- d) What organisms are routinely tested for?**

Answer: The Trust has reviewed question 7 of your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000.

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Question 8: Does your Trust/Health Board conduct 16S PCR testing of bacteria from synovial fluid of patients who have suspected septic arthritis of native joints?

If yes:

- a) Is this testing conducted on site?**
- b) At what point is testing requested – when the culture is negative or on request?**
- c) How long is the average turnaround time for results from receipt of specimen?**
- d) What organisms are routinely tested for?**

Answer: The Trust has reviewed question 8 of your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000.

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Question 9: For joint infections, in your Trust/Health Board, please confirm the following:
a) Which roles or stakeholders are involved in the design of diagnostic pathways and introducing change/pathway improvement?
b) Which team(s) hold the budget for investing and implementing in new technologies across the pathway (e.g. rapid diagnostic testing)?

Answer: The Trust has reviewed question 9 of your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000.

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