

**Information Governance**

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8 March 2024

**Our reference: FOI DA5153**

I am responding to your request for information received 17 January 2024. I am sorry for the delay in responding to your request. This has been treated as a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

When an organisation receives a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act, it is allowed under the Act to apply a blanket exemption to this where it has concluded that providing a response would take in excess of eighteen hours.

When the cost of compliance and extracting information would exceed eighteen hours, a cost limit of £450 can be applied. This is explained in Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and is based on a rate of £25 per hour, regardless of the rate of pay of any individual involved in the retrieval of requested information, and equates to eighteen hours work.

Having reviewed your request, the Trust has noted that it would not be able to provide all the information requested within the eighteen hours specified in the Freedom of Information Act 2000. However, in this instance and to assist you, we have provided a partial response to your request as per below.

In order to assist you with your request, I have advised below the timing each question would take to help you to refine your request. If you wish to refine your request to comply with the eighteen hour time limit, please do get in touch.

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



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'what matters' to everyone, achieve a better quality  
of life and continuously improve our services.  
**We care . We respect . We are inclusive**

**Interim Chief Executive Officer:** Lorraine Sunduza  
**Chair:** Eileen Taylor

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](http://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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**Request:** I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 regarding amounts invoiced and written off for overseas visitors not entitled to free NHS care at your trust.

Which I am aware, having sent a similar freedom of information request many years ago in 2012, is contained on your records.

Please follow points 1-3, and only if there is no possibility of a cost overrun, then proceed to number 4.

If there is, treat the freedom of information request as 1- 3 only. And do not answer 4.

**Question 1:** The total amounts invoiced each year to overseas visitors not entitled to free NHS care, broken down by financial year. Please provide the following information, broken down, for the past 5 financial years from 2018/19 to 2022/23

**Answer:** Please see table below:

Financial Year	Total invoice to overseas patients
2018/19	£51,326.65
2019/20	£42,158.72
2020/21	£59,424.55
2021/22	£26,744.52
2022/23	£84,828.86

**Question 2:** The total amounts written off each year as uncollectible from overseas visitors after invoices were generated, broken down by financial year. Please provide the following information, broken down, for the past 5 financial years from 2018/19 to 2022/23.

**Answer:** Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 states:

Section 12(1) does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit.

When the Trust identifies that the request is likely to take over 18 hours, we are not obliged to provide information for any part of the request. We are required to provide advice on how you may refine your request to information that can be collated within the 18 hour timeframe. You may then choose what information you would like to receive and confirm the same to us, upon which we will process your request.

The Trust has reviewed your request for information and in order to collate this information, it would be necessary to review all invoices on file and it is estimated to take over 18.5 hours to collate.

**Question 3:** The total amount spent chasing the above debt, if documented, broken down by financial year. Please provide the following information, broken down, for the past 5 financial years from 2018/19 to 2022/23.

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

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



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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 does document expenditure on debt collection as requested and is therefore unable to provide a response.

**(IF NO COST OVERRUN – THEN PLEASE PROCEED TO PART 4. IF YOU ARE APPROACHING A COST OVERRUN OR THE INFORMATION IS NOT VERY EASILY ACCESSIBLE, FINISH THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST AT 3)**

**Question 4: Any internal policies, procedures or documents outlining how challenging for your trust to recover costs from certain categories of overseas visitors, as:**

- **Deceased or untraceable patients**
- **Failed asylum seekers**
- **Patients who have left the country**
- **Any other categories**

Answer: Not applicable.



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