

**Information Governance**

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

18 April 2024

**Our reference: FOI DA5300**

I am responding to your request for information received 28 March 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](http://www.ico.org.uk)

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'what matters' to everyone, achieve a better quality  
of life and continuously improve our services.  
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**Interim Chief Executive Officer:** Lorraine Sunduza  
**Chair:** Eileen Taylor

**Request:**

**Question 1: Do you have a specialist service for long Covid patients within your trust? Please name the clinic/service**

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

Section 21(1) of the FOI Act states:  
*(1) Information which is reasonably accessible to the applicant otherwise than under section 1 is exempt information.*

The information requested is accessible here:

<https://www.elft.nhs.uk/services/long-covid-service>

**Question 2: How many patients in your local NHS area have been referred to the clinic/service to date? Please break down by year to date ie 12 months to this date in 2024 and then each of the previous 12 months back to the start of the service**

**Answer:** Please see table below:

Patient referrals to the Long Covid Service													
Financial Year	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
2020 / 2021	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	39	65	70	174
2021 / 2022	82	78	81	53	53	62	32	33	17	42	21	38	592
2022 / 2023	30	37	32	33	28	23	21	17	21	15	15	13	285
2023 / 2024	19	16	12	7	12	7	6	7	4	20	6	7	123

**Question 3: Is the service physician-led?**

**Answer:** Yes, the service is physician-led.

**Question 4: Please provide figures for how many patients referred to the clinic/service received the following type of treatment in-house:**

- a) physical rehabilitation – please give details
- b) Graded exercise therapy
- c) CBT or other psychological intervention – please state whether this is to cope with symptoms or with a view to improving/treating them
- d) Advice on pacing
- e) A brain retraining or Neuro Linguistic Programming-based course such as the Lightning Process,
- f) Gupta Programme or Nuffield programme (please specify which)
- g) drug treatment
- h) other, please specify

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

Section 40 for the FOI Act states:



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*(2) This exemption covers the personal data of third parties (anyone other than the requester) where complying with the request would breach any of the principles in the UK GDPR.*

In order for the Trust to provide the information requested, we would have to access patient records as the information is not held in a searchable format. We do not have a legal basis to access patient records for the purposes of responding to a freedom of information request. The Trust is therefore unable to provide a response.

**Question 5: Does the service have the ability to prescribe medications to long Covid patients for symptoms where appropriate?**

Answer: No, the service does not have the ability to prescribe medication to long covid patients. The Trust's Pharmacy does not specifically supply medicines for the Long Covid service.

**Question 6: If so, please list the 3 most common drugs prescribed for long Covid patients by the clinic, with numbers of prescriptions if possible**

Answer: Not applicable.

**Question 7: Does the service have the ability to order diagnostic tests and scans?**

Answer: No. The service does not have the ability to order testing, but we do regularly request the GP to complete (orders) should they agree with our clinical reasoning.

**Question 8: If so please list the 3 most commonly ordered tests/scans/diagnostic questionnaires for long Covid patients by the clinic**

Answer: Not applicable.

**Question 9: If not provided in-house, which of the following types of services does the clinic/service refer patients onto or recommend?**

**a) physical rehabilitation – please give details**

Answer: The Trust refers to yoga sessions.

**b) Graded exercise therapy.**

Answer: Graded exercise therapy is provided in-house if required.

**c) CBT or other psychological intervention – please state whether this is to cope with symptoms or with a view to improving/treating them.**

Answer: The Trust refers to IAPT services within the Trust.

**d) Advice on pacing**

Answer: Advice on pacing is provided in-house.

**e) A brain retraining or Neuro Linguistic Programming-based course such as the Lightning Process, Gupta Programme or Nuffield programme (please specify which)**



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Answer: The Trust does not provide a Neuro-Linguistic Programming-based course nor refer elsewhere.

**f) drug treatment.**

Answer: The Trust does not provide drug treatment for Long Covid and would refer elsewhere.

**g) other, please specify.**

Answer: Not applicable.

**Question 10: How many staff do you have working in the service FTE (full time equivalent) broken down by job title of:**

- a) doctor
- b) nurse
- c) physiotherapist
- d) occupational therapist
- e) clinical psychologist/ CBT practitioner / psychotherapist/counsellor
- f) other, please specify

Answer: Please see table below:

Role	Number of Staff - FTE
Doctor	0
Nurse	0
Physiotherapist	2
Occupational Therapist	2.6
Clinical Psychologist/ CBT Practitioner / Psychotherapist/Counsellor	0
Other, please specify:	
Admin	2
Assistant Practitioner	1

**Question 11: For any doctors employed, please specify their specialism eg GP, cardiologist, neurologist, psychiatrist**

Answer: Not applicable.

**Question 12: Is the clinic expected to continue running after 2025?**

Answer: The Trust has reviewed question 12 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 does not record the information requested and is therefore unable to provide a response.



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