



East London

NHS Foundation Trust

Information Governance

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22nd May 2026

Our reference: FOI DA6572

We are responding to your request for information received 14th April 2026. We are sorry for the delay in responding to your request. This has been treated as a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

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

Yours sincerely,

FOI Team

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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Chief Executive Officer: Lorraine Sunduza
Chair: Eileen Taylor

Request:

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 regarding outcomes for patients with Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (ME/CFS) attending your service.

For the purposes of this request, “gainful employment” is defined as the ability to sustain paid work of at least 30 hours per week for a continuous period of 12 months without significant relapse or deterioration in symptoms.

I am particularly interested in patients with long-term or more severe presentations, specifically those who:

Have had symptoms for 5 years or more, have a low baseline level of functional capacity, have experienced progressive or sustained deterioration over time.

Please provide the following information if held:

Question 1: Does your service consider restoration to the level of gainful employment defined above (30 hours per week sustained for 12 months without significant relapse) to be:

An expected or typical outcome, or

Not an anticipated outcome for patients with illness duration of 5 years or more and/or low baseline function?

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 does not record such information in relation to “gainful employment” or work capacity and is therefore unable to provide a response.

However, collecting and reporting employment outcomes is something we are considering as part of the NHS move towards preventive population health.

Question 2: Does your service hold any outcome data, audit findings, or evidence demonstrating that patients meeting the above criteria achieve and sustain this level of work capacity following treatment? If yes, please provide a summary of the data (including numbers of patients, timeframes, and success rates). If no, please confirm this explicitly.

Answer: The Trust has reviewed question 2 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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Question 3: If restoration to sustained 30-hour work capacity is not considered an expected outcome for this group, please confirm:

What level of functional improvement is typically expected (e.g., modest gains, stabilisation, or symptom management only)?

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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(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 such information in relation to “gainful employment” or work capacity and is therefore unable to provide a response.

However, collecting and reporting employment outcomes is something we are considering as part of the NHS move towards preventive population health.

Question 4: Whether your service tracks or records return-to-work outcomes specifically for patients with illness duration ≥5 years or low baseline function. If so, please provide any available summary data

Answer: The Trust has reviewed question 4 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 such information in relation to “gainful employment” or work capacity and is therefore unable to provide a response.

However, collecting and reporting employment outcomes is something we are considering as part of the NHS move towards preventive population health.

Question 5: Copies of any current service specifications, clinical guidelines, or commissioning documents that describe expected outcomes for patients with long-term or severe ME/CFS.

Answer: Please see appendix one



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