

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Ref: DPT 20/21/071

Date: 18/08/2020

Thank you for your request under the Freedom of Information Act.

QUESTIONS

I'm writing from Trans Health UK, an independent website seeking to provide health information to trans people in the UK. We started during the coronavirus pandemic as a way of quickly getting service information at a time of disruption. We're trying to ensure we have quality information based on both provider and community input.

As lockdown eases and new health practices emerge, we know that some GICs are beginning to open up services again and change how they're providing services. We'd be really grateful if you could provide us with a little information so that we're able to keep the trans community, both current and future patients, informed:

1. Are you currently arranging first appointments from your waiting list? If so, is this in person, by phone and/or by video call? If not, do you have an estimate of when this might begin again, or a process for reviewing it?

We are not yet offering appointments to those who are awaiting a first appointment at the clinic. We are pleased to say that we are now working hard with our commissioners to address these issues and to make headway in reducing waiting lists and times, but the challenges are significant. We have appointed two new doctors to the service and have moved some of our work online, phone or video call, to help improve access and minimise travel. We write to everyone making referrals to our service advising them of the current situation.

2. Are you currently making recommendations for patients to begin a course of hormone therapy, or only maintaining existing prescriptions?

Yes

3. If new recommendations are possible, does this require a particular type of appointment (e.g. phone, video, face-to-face)?

This can be done by video call or face to face with careful planning.

4. Are you currently rearranging dates for postponed surgical treatment, and/or making new referrals for surgical treatment?

We are unable to give information regarding surgical dates as this is under the control of the surgical providers. We have made surgical referrals as appropriate.

5. Do you have an estimated waiting time till first appointment?

Unfortunately not at the moment, however, we are aware that it will be at least five years from date of referral

6. Do you have a public update on service disruptions due to the pandemic, and do you have a plan for keeping this updated?

Our website contains general information regarding waiting times and is updated regularly

APPEALS PROCEDURE

Any appeal against this decision should be made in writing to:

Chief Information Officer,
Devon Partnership NHS Trust,
Prentice Building,
Langdon Hospital,
Dawlish,
EX7 0NR.

The decision will be reviewed and a response provided within 20 working days. If you remain unsatisfied by the decision a complaint may be made in writing to the Complaints/Litigation Administrator at the above address for the matter to be dealt with in accordance with the Trust complaints policy.

Alternatively, you have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner at: Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Tel: 0303 123 1113. For further information please refer to www.ico.org.uk

We are monitoring how people making Freedom of Information requests are experiencing the process and would value your feedback in order to improve the service as necessary. If you wish to provide feedback please respond via the following link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/BC6QXBM>