



**Wrightington,
Wigan and Leigh**
NHS Foundation Trust

Information Governance

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Ref: FOI2019/5483

Date Received: 26th June 2019

Response Due: 24th July 2019

5th July 2019

Dear

INFORMATION REQUEST UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

You asked:

I am writing to make an open government request for all the information to which I am entitled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

(NB - In order to better explain the terminology used on these FOI questions, IA/ RPA refers to a style of automation where computer software mimics a human's interaction with application software in completing rules based tasks and processes. It is considered to provide a highly scalable virtual workforce that completes the repetitive tasks humans normally undertake. The general consensus is that this releases human employees from tedious tasks to instead focus on deeper cognitive thinking, investigative analysis and decision making. At a time of reduced workforce capacity, we are interested in the views of NHS organisations as regards employing a digital workforce using IA/ RPA to free up precious staff time)

Please you please answer the following:

1. Does your organization presently use and/or endorse a RPA/IA (description of this detailed above) to automate manual, rule-based processes?

No

If the answer is NO –

1.1 Is RPA/IA something that the organisation would consider (within the next 2 years) as a way of supporting reduced human resource capacity & to improve repeatable business outcomes?

Yes

1.2 If the organisation is not considering RPA technology – is there a reason why this is not being considered? N/A

- **Perceived expense**
- **Concerns about how existing administrative staff would accept this**
- **This is the first time we have heard about RPA/ IA**
- **Other reason (please feel free to comment)**

1.3 If the answer is YES – RPA/IA is currently being used in the organisation - could you please detail – N/A

1.3.1 The system type/name/supplier - N/A

1.3.2 What it is used for (or has been used for) and by what department, examples below – N/A

- **Outpatient Services**
- **Data Migration**
- **Improving Referral to Treatment (RTT) processes**
- **Onboarding / Off-Boarding staff**
- **Back office / Finance related process automations**
- **Other (please comment) –**

1.3.3 How did the existing human workforce react to tasks being replaced by automation? N/A

- **Good, they welcome the changes**
- **Bad, they felt threatened**
- **Indifferent**
- **Not sure – no feedback**
- **Other – please comment**

1.3 4 When did your RPA/ IA system come into use and when does the contract expire? N/A

1.3.5 How much does this new technology cost the organisation & if applicable, how many robots are employed? N/A

1.3.6 Has there been any analysis of the system, (&/or case studies) to demonstrate any benefits so far- operationally, financially or as regards patient safety/management? N/A

2. Who is the main person(s)/ decision maker (s) or team – who would probably be responsible (or is responsible) for the decision to use RPA/IA in your organization? - Name/title/ contact details

Martyn Smith. Acting Associate Director of IM&T. martyn.smith@wwl.nhs.uk

I trust that this information is helpful to you, however if you are not entirely satisfied with this response please do not hesitate to contact the Information Governance Department on 01257 488271. If we do not hear from you within 28 days we will assume that we have been able to accommodate your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew Foster
Chief Executive

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If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our decision, you should write to: Information Governance Department, Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust, Wrightington Hospital, Hall Lane, Appley Bridge, Wigan, WN6 9EP

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF