



# Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals

NHS Foundation Trust

Information Governance Department

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Ref: FOI/2025/10479

Date Received: 29<sup>th</sup> January 2025

Response Due: 26<sup>th</sup> February 2025

Date: 25<sup>th</sup> February 2025

Dear Sir/Madam

With reference to your request for information received on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2025, I can confirm in accordance with Section 1 (1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 that we do hold the information you have requested. A response to each part of your request is provided below.

In your request you asked:

**Please find below the questions we hope you can assist us with:**

- 1. How many episodes of care were coded by your organisation in 2024 (both inpatient and outpatient)?**  
Inpatients = 102,631.  
Outpatients = 501,681
- 2. How many episodes of care went uncoded in 2024?**  
4 due to late recording.
- 3. How much income do you estimate was not generated due to uncoded activity?**  
N/A.
- 4. Can you provide the split of coding volumes between specialities (e.g., oncology, cardiology)?**  
Please see attached.

The Trust has a standard procedure of not releasing information when the data involved is less than 5. This is because we feel that such low numbers could make the individuals involved identifiable and therefore may cause undue harm and distress.

To disclose this information would:

- a) Contravene the Data Protection Act principles in that it would amount to unfair and possibly unlawful processing, as there was a legitimate expectation by the third parties that this information would remain confidential, and
- b) Disclosure may cause damage or distress to the individual(s) involved, and that damage or distress would be unwarranted (section 10 of the DPA).

**5. Please explain how your organisation manages coding activity.**

We code to the PBR deadlines flex / freeze, all patient discharged activity generates reports that the coders have access to and we work from that on a daily basis.

**6. Are outpatient and inpatient coding managed by the same team or separate teams?**

Separate teams.

**7. How many Whole-Time Equivalent (WTE) staff complete clinical coding for the Trust?**

21.37.

**8. What proportion of the total WTE staff for clinical coding is substantive (permanent), bank staff, and agency staff?**

All are permanent staff.

**9. Does the Trust currently have any automated solutions in place for clinical coding?**

No, all through reviewing systems.

**10. If yes, please explain the automated solution that is in place.**

N/A.

**11. If not, is the Trust planning to implement automated coding solutions in the next 12–24 months? Or would it be interested in exploring potential solutions?**

We are looking to explore potential solutions.

**12. Is the Trust currently on Payment by Results (PbR), block contracts, or another financial model?**

A mixture of Payment by Results (PbR) and Block Contracts.

**13. What clinical coding systems or software does the Trust currently use to capture clinical codes?**

Simple code encoder.

**14. Does your Trust's Electronic Patient Record (EPR) system integrate clinical coding, or do clinical departments use standalone systems?**

Coders have access to Altera Sunrise (HIS system) and other stand alone systems to complete their work. Including ICU, Eyes, Maternity, Paediatrics etc.

**15. What are the main challenges the Trust faces in clinical coding (e.g., timeliness, accuracy, staffing shortages)?**

We are not required to create new information to respond to a request or give judgement or opinion that is not already recorded. Furthermore, the Trust is not required to create new information or find answers to a question from staff that may happen to know. The Information Commissioner has confirmed this position in its online guidance on handling FOI requests.

**16. Could you provide the contact details (name, job title, and email) of the person who is ultimately responsible for overseeing clinical coding within the Trust?**

Pam Green, Deputy Director of Clinical Information & CNIO.

The Trust does not routinely give out email addresses and direct telephone numbers of staff members, as large numbers of unsolicited emails/telephone calls, could cause disruption by blocking email accounts/telephone lines thus preventing true work-related emails/calls from being delivered. However, any of the above staff can be contacted via main switchboard on 01942 244000.

If you are not entirely satisfied with this response, please do not hesitate to contact the Information Governance Department via the email address provided. If we do not hear from you within 40 days, we will assume that we have been able to accommodate your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Garry Harris', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Garry Harris  
Deputy Director Digital & Chief Technology Officer

PLEASE NOTE:

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, Wroughtington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust, Suite 9, Buckingham Row, Brick Kiln Lane, Wigan, WN1 1XX.

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision at:

The Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire, SK9 5AF

Helpline number: 0303 123 111