

Ref: FOI/2025/11309

Date Received: 19<sup>th</sup> December 2025

Response Due: 21<sup>st</sup> January 2026

Date: 21<sup>st</sup> January 2026

Dear Sir/Madam

With reference to your request for information received on 19th December 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:

**I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. I would be grateful if you could provide the following data relating to irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and gastroenterology/dietetic services.**

## 1. Patient Referrals

**a. The number of patients diagnosed with IBS who have been referred to gastroenterology services in each of the past five years.**

Year	Outpatient Attendances*
2021/22	11
2022/23	74
2023/24	87
2024/25	65
2025/26	71

The above information is based on new attendances for clinics IBDPHONE, IBDEL, L3AIBD, L3PIBD, T1PIBD, T2PIBD, T3PIBD, T4PIBD, T5AIBD, T5PIBD.

We are unable to confirm whether the above patients have been diagnosed with IBS as OP appointments are not coded. However, the above figures are based on patients who have attended an IBS clinic.

**b. The number of patients diagnosed with IBS who have been referred to dietetic services in each of the past five years.**

We are unable to provide this information as we cannot identify whether patients who are seen in Dietetic clinics are IBS patients. Patient notes would have to be manually reviewed in order to establish a diagnosis.

**c. What criteria are used to determine whether an IBS patient is referred to gastroenterology vs dietetics?**

Faecal Calprotectin less than 50 and age less than 40 with no red flags or abnormal investigations are referred to a dietician. Please see attached

**2. Workforce**

**a. The number of dietitians currently employed by the Trust who are trained or specialised in gut health, IBS, or gastrointestinal disorders.**

0.5 WTE (1 Dietitian)

**3. Waiting Times and Waiting List Size**

**a. The current average waiting time for a gastroenterology appointment, and the number of IBS patients currently on the gastroenterology waiting list and for how long.**

The average days wait to 1st appointment for 2025/26, to be seen by the outpatient IBS clinic, is 103 days.

**b. The current average waiting time for a dietitian appointment, and the number of IBS patients currently on the dietetic waiting list and for how long.**

We are unable to identify which patients on the waiting list have been diagnosed with IBS, therefore we are unable to provide this information without manually reviewing patient notes.

**4. Service Capacity and Referral Pathways**

**a. If the Trust is unable to offer appointments to all patients with IBS who are referred to gastroenterology or dietetic services, please describe the process followed.**

**• Where are these patients directed or signposted to (e.g., community services, external providers, self-management resources)?**

For dietetic services, there are no community dietitians or external providers to refer on to. There are freelance dietitians available if patients ask about this and they are given contact details of the BDA freelance dietitians website.

The British Dietetic Association (BDA) Food Fact sheet gives basic information and links to other useful resources. The dietetic department also stock a general booklet for IBS and diet that can be sent to patients when indicated.

**5. Service provision:**

**• Does the Trust offer any specialist IBS clinics or multidisciplinary clinics?**

IBS patients are seen within the clinic capacity of the Gastroenterology dietitian. There are no unique clinics set up only for IBS patients.

**• What patient education or self-management resources are provided for IBS?**

Patients are referred to the BDA (British Dietetic Association) Food Fact Sheet IBS and Diet which offers links to other useful organisations and the link to the Private Dietitians website as well. The dietetic department also stock a general booklet for IBS and diet that can be sent to patients when indicated.

**• Does the Trust outsource IBS-related dietetic or gastroenterology care to private or third-party providers? If so, to which providers and how many patients in each of the last five years?**

The Trust does not outsource IBS-related dietetic care directly to private or third-party providers.

**6. Follow-up and discharge policy:**

**• What is the Trust's policy for follow-up appointments for IBS patients?**

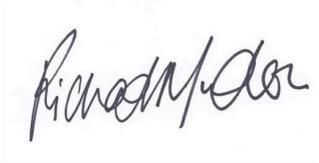
IBS patients under dietetic care typically have 2 appointments (an initial assessment and then a follow-up) and then discharged. Any additional appointments are at the discretion of the dietitian based on clinical need.

**• Under what circumstances are IBS patients discharged back to GP care?**

For dietetic patients, they are discharged on completion of their dietetic management care plan or if they fail to opt-in for an appointment or if they do not attend an appointment.

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 'Richard Mundon', is enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Richard Mundon  
Deputy Chief Executive

**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, Wrightington, 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