



Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals

NHS Foundation Trust

Information Governance Department
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Wigan
WN1 1XX

Email: foi@wwl.nhs.uk
Web: www.wwl.nhs.uk

Ref: FOI/2023/9487

Date Received: 27th December 2023

Response Due: 25th January 2024

Date: 25th January 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

With reference to your request for information received on 27th December 2023, 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:

- 1. Has your Trust implemented “Getting it Right First Time” (GIRFT) pathway for suspected Cauda Equina Syndrome (CES) in all of its hospitals?**

No

- 2. If the answer to Q1 is affirmative, please advise when it was implemented and advise on the following:**

- Number of CES related training to staff in the period since implemented compared to the same period duration prior to implementation**

N/A

- Number of MRI scans undertaken for suspected CES in the period since implemented compared to the same period duration prior to implementation;**

N/A

- Average time between MRI referral and performance of the scan for suspected CES in the period since implemented compared to the same period duration prior to implementation;**

N/A

- **Number of patients who underwent surgery for CES in the period since implemented compared to the same period duration prior to implementation;**

N/A

- **Breakdown of feedback raised by clinicians with your Trust regarding implementation of the pathway including total number of clinicians who provided feedback, whether positive or negative and its nature (for example resource issue /training/delays/patient safety).**

N/A

3. If the answer to Q1 is negative, please state:

- **If only some hospitals within your Trust implemented the pathway, please state which ones did not and the reason why.**

Lack of resource to provide a 24/7 MR service. No radiographic resource available to provide overnight scans and reports. Current service is at the “maximised” stage with at least 2 ringfenced slots provided each day, although, the capacity to increase this capacity to meet increases in demand is done on a frequent basis.

- **What other policy is followed with regards to the diagnosis and management of CES?**

Local procedures guided by the tertiary spinal centre. Trust to trust communication can be facilitated and audited using Patient Pass. Imaging can be shared directly with the tertiary centre using a direct PACS link. Referrals to other neurosciences departments within the region will require the use of Image Exchange Portal to share images. Clinical care is currently shared with Orthopaedic and emergency care teams as the Trust does not have resident neurologists or spinal surgeons. Management of the patient is reliant upon the support of the tertiary provider.

- **Are the plans for the pathway to be implemented in the future and if so when? If not, why not?**

Uncertain as the primary management of the patient is by the tertiary provider. The requirement to undertake early diagnostic imaging within the referring trust is being coordinated with a system approach rather than individual trusts implementing the GIRFT pathway independently. Multiple issues have been cited across all the non-tertiary providers within the healthcare system. Co-ordination of the tasks to implement the guidance either partially or fully are being led by the Imaging Network Clinical Reference Group which comprises the Clinical Directors of Radiology and Radiographic/Operation Radiology Service Manager from across the system.

- **Breakdown of feedback raised by clinicians with your Trust regarding lack of implementation of the pathway including total number of clinicians who provided feedback, whether positive or negative and its nature (for example resource issue/training/delays/patient safety)**

We are unable to provide this information as the information is not held in a reportable or structured format in our central system.

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 'Hazel Hendriksen', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Hazel Hendriksen
Director of Operations and Performance

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