Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Freedom of Information Act and You

Version number: **10**
Last modified date: **12th November 2026**

The Freedom of Information Act and You

Patient Information

Data Analytics and Assurance

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Background

“The Freedom of Information Act gives you the right to obtain information held by public authorities.”

Information Commissioner’s Office

The purpose of the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) is to create a greater understanding between members of the public and public authorities such as Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. It also generates opportunities for better communication and trust.

Information which the Trust publishes

The Trust has developed a Publication Scheme. This details information we routinely publish such as what the Trust does. You can access the Publication Scheme via the Trust website at www.wwl.nhs.uk.

The information which you have requested may have previously been released therefore before submitting an application please check the Trust’s Freedom of Information Requests Disclosure Log via the Trust website at www.wwl.nhs.uk.

The Trust also publishes information which is frequently asked for, such as bed numbers, structure charts, and car parking charges. Please see our FAQ page at wwl.wwl.nhs.uk

The information published is provided on the Trust Website in line with legislation and free of charge. Please note that if you require copies of information published on the website, in any other format, we reserve the right to charge a fee for the information that you request.

What information can be requested under the FOI Act?

The Act covers any recorded information that is held by a public authority in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and by UK-wide public authorities based in Scotland. Information held by Scottish public authorities is covered by Scotland's own Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

Recorded information includes printed documents, computer files, letters, emails, photographs, and sound or video recordings.

The Act does not give people access to their own personal data (information about themselves) such as their health records. If a member of the public would like information regarding accessing their health records they should contact the Access to Health Records Department (Tel: 01942 822541/ 01257 256462.

Email: accesstohealthrecords.raei@wwl.nhs.uk)

How to make a request

Requests can be made either electronically or in writing. Any request must include your name and a return correspondence address, please see below:

Freedom of Information Team

Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Information Governance Department

Suite 9

Buckingham Row

Brick Kiln Lane

Wigan

WN1 1XX

Email: foi@wwl.nhs.uk

Once the request has been received, the Trust will need to check to make sure that the information is held by the Trust. If we need clarification on any part of your request we will contact you, please note that while we wait for you to reply the “20 working day” clock is put on hold. If the information which you have requested is not held, the Trust will advise you of this as soon as possible.

Charges

As a general rule, a copy of anything listed in the Publication Scheme is free of charge.

For Freedom of Information requests, regulation states that a request should be processed without any charge unless the time involved to collate the information exceeds 18 hours. Many factors can be included in calculating the amount of time taken, for example: the information is not readily available and it may take a member of staff a significant amount of

time to collate an answer. Other factors such as redaction cannot be included in this calculation. The Freedom of Information team will advise you if it is possible to refine your request in order for it to be completed in less than 18 hours.

Queries

1. If the information is listed in the Publication Scheme on the website, the relevant contact details will be detailed in the same section of the scheme.

2. If you do not find the information you require you can contact the Freedom of Information Team or the Patient Relation Department who will help you.

Our responsibilities

Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust will:

1. Ensure records are accurate and kept for the right length of time.

2. Ensure requests and queries are dealt with without delay.

3. Advise and assist you when making requests.

4. Help you to understand any information provided to you.

Is there any information that will not be provided?

We will make every effort to provide you with a copy of the information you request.

There are exemptions under the Act which means that the Trust will not have to disclose certain information. If we are considering an exemption we will write to inform you. In these cases the amount of time granted under the Act increases to 40 days.

Some examples are:

1. Someone else's confidential or personal information
2. Company trade secrets
3. Information that is easily available elsewhere or is scheduled to be published.

If we are unable to release some or all of the information you request, we will give you our reasons.

Does this mean someone else can see my personal information?

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 does not change your right to confidentiality. Your personal information is still protected by Data Protection legislation and will not be shared with anyone who is not entitled to it.

More information about confidentiality and Data Protection legislation is available in our leaflet "How we use your Personal Information." This can be located on the Trust website.

Where can I get more information from?

If you would like more information about the Freedom of Information Act, please visit the Trust website or visit the Information Commissioner's website on **www.ico.gov.uk**. You can also contact them via telephone on 0303 123 1113.

Contact Details

For details of the Publication Scheme, go to the Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust website:

www.wwl.nhs.uk

To make a request for information, please contact the:

Freedom of Information Team at foi@wwl.nhs.uk or alternatively write to:

Freedom of Information Team

Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Suite 9

Buckingham Row

Brick Kiln Lane

Wigan

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