

Addendum to Freedom of Information Policy

Introduction

This addendum is in addition to the Freedom of Information policy and is to be used in conjunction with any emergency incident/crisis and read alongside the full Freedom of Information policy.

Freedom of information requests should still be processed as normal, however, should an incident occur then the following measures will need to be adapted to ensure that the CCG is complying with legislation.

Any requests that are in relation to the emergency incident/crisis should be forwarded to the incident team who will then decide who this should be sent to and to co-ordinate responses with other collaborative organisations. All final responses should be sent back to the FOI team (Leedsccg.foi@nhs.net) so the response letter can be drafted ready for final approval.

Should NHS Leeds CCG enter an emergency incident/crisis the acknowledgement to requestor will be reworded as follows:

[name of incident]

Please note that Business as usual activity has been suspended until [specify date]. We have logged your request and we will respond to you in due course with either a response or an update on progress.

We acknowledge receipt of your e-mail requesting information from the CCG under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the Act"). Please note that whilst the CCG strives to be open and is normally able to satisfy requests in full, the right of access is not absolute and we therefore have to refuse queries, either in full or in part, on the basis of the exemptions (for example, in cases where disclosure would breach patient confidentiality, or put people in danger). All such decisions will be made, and fully justified, in accordance with the law.

We are required under the Act to respond to valid queries no later than the twentieth working day following receipt. Your request was received on [date], which means our deadline for response **under normal business as usual circumstances** calculates to [date]. If we are able to respond to you sooner than this, we will do so.

Should you have any queries or concerns in the meantime, please contact us directly using the e-mail address, Leedsccg.foi@nhs.net and quoting reference number [ref number].

Please note, if having fully considered your request, we reasonably require further information in order to respond, we will request this from you by e-mail as soon as possible. In all such cases, the above timescales will be disregarded and the 20 working day clock shall instead begin once we have

received the necessary clarification. There shall be no duty for us to comply with your request until we receive this information from you.

If the request is not based on the current incident, then the request will be sent to the normal department for processing. If the person is unable to obtain the information in the specified time frame, then the FOI team will need to update the requestor as soon as possible with a revised date. This will ensure that the requestor is aware that they may not receive the requested information under the normal business as usual circumstances.

Please note: Staff should be aware that if responses are not actioned immediately, then these will be backed up and a response will be needed at a later date. Heads of Departments will need to ensure that these are considered as a work load priority when the CCG returns to a business as usual status.