

Freedom of Information Act Request

Under the Freedom of Information Act, I would like to request the following information:

Dear Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust,

Could you please tell me for each of the years (a) 2022, (b) 2023 and (c) 2024

How many complaints through the patient advice and liaison system (PALS) your trust received from patients alleging they had been discriminated against or badly treated by a member of staff because of their being (i) overweight or obese, or (ii) a sexuality other than heterosexual.

NOTE: In relation to the weight query please do this by searching for complaints containing any of the words "weight", "fat", "obese", "overweight" and "bariatric" and filtering these to find those that refer to fat-shaming comments made by a member of staff.

Can you select the first five such complaints from 2024 for each category and provide me with the following details:

1. What type of staff member was the complaint levelled against? E.g. healthcare assistant, junior doctor, consultant, cleaner, kitchen staff
2. Please quote the words allegedly used by the hospital staff or summarise the offending action
3. Please tell me what, if any, action was taken by your trust in response to these sample complaints from the beginning of 2024.

We can confirm that the Trust uses Datix, which is the electronic system adopted widely across the NHS for recording and managing incidents, complaints, and other patient safety concerns, including those received via the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS).

While the Trust does hold records of complaints received through PALS, we do not currently filter or categorise the data specifically by the subjects of discrimination based on weight/obesity or sexuality. The Datix system does not have predefined fields or filters that would allow us to easily identify and extract complaints specifically related to the categories you have requested.

To determine whether any PALS complaints involve alleged discrimination on these grounds, each record would need to be manually reviewed. Given the volume of records, this process would exceed the appropriate time limit set out in Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act (18 hours), which exempts public authorities from being required to comply with a request if doing so would exceed this limit.

Our Ref: 295
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Additionally, we are unable to offer further advice or assistance on narrowing the scope of your request in a way that would bring it within the time limit, as there is no practical way to identify these cases without an extensive manual search.

If you are not satisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to request an internal review. Requests for an internal review should be submitted within 40 working days from the date of this response, and should be addressed to d.wraith@nhs.net.

If you remain dissatisfied after the internal review, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). The ICO can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Tel: 0303 123 1113
Website: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/>