Our Ref: 495
August 2025

Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Freedom of Information Act Request

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

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I am requesting aggregate information regarding services provided or commissioned by your Trust in relation to peripheral neuropathic pain (PNP), with a specific focus on:

- Post-surgical neuropathic pain (PSNP)

- Cancer-related neuropathic pain (CRNP)

- Painful diabetic peripheral neuropathy (PDPN)

Please break down the information by individual service, clinic, and by hospital site.

1. Patient Numbers & Treatment Modalities (Last 12 Months) –

For each hospital site or service, please provide:

The number of patients seen for each of the following conditions:

- PSNP

- CRNP (please split into surgically induced and chemotherapy-induced)

- PDPN

- Please also break this down by hospital department.

We do not operate specific services for PSNP, CRNP (surgically or chemotherapy-induced), or PDPN. As such, we do not hold patient number data in the categories you have requested, nor do we hold departmental breakdowns for these conditions.

Treatment Modalities

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For each hospital site or service, please indicate Yes or No as to whether the following treatment modalities are available for PNP. Where stated yes please provide patient numbers for the latest 12-month period.

Gabapentin prescriptions - **Yes**

Botulinum toxin (Botox) injections - **No**

TENS (Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation) - **No**

Acupuncture (including PENS – Percutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation) - **No**

Theatre-based nerve stimulation procedures (e.g., spinal cord stimulators or other implanted/surgical neuromodulation devices) - **No**

If exact numbers are unavailable, proxy data is acceptable (e.g., the percentage of neuropathic pain patients receiving each treatment modality).

I am writing to confirm that DBTH holds the information on the subject you have requested. However, I advise you that we will not be able to answer your request without exceeding the appropriate limit. This is because our pharmacy system doesn't store diagnosis data, so we're unable to determine this against the prescribed treatment. To ascertain this data, the Trust would need to perform an audit of each individual patient record, which wouldn't be achievable within the s.12 timescale of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Section 12 of the Act makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit, we have estimated that it would take more than 18 hours to carry out a manual search to locate, retrieve, and extract all the information you have requested. In this situation the associated cost would therefore exceed the appropriate fee limit of £450 set out under Freedom of Information & Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2007.

The fee limit specified in regulations for NHS trusts represents the cost of one person spending 2½ working days at a rate of £25 per hour determining whether the Trust holds the information sought and then locating, retrieving and extracting that information.

2. Service Provision

Does your Trust or provider offer specific or dedicated services for PSNP, CRNP, and/or PDPN?

- If yes, please list each relevant service or site (e.g., pain clinic, neurology clinic, diabetic foot clinic, community pain service) along with their addresses.

Yes we do offer a Chronic Pain Management Service at Montagu Hospital, Adwick Road, Mexbrough, S64 0AZ. We do not have a specific service for PSNP, CRNP or PDPN.

For each listed site or service, please indicate:

- The types of healthcare professionals routinely involved (e.g., pain specialists, neurologists, specialist nurses, physiotherapists, psychologists)

- The number of staff per role (headcount or FTE if available)

Pain Consultants – 2.5 FTE
Specialist Nurses – 1FTE
CBT – 0.4 FTE

3. Referral Pathways & Service Specifications -

Are there established care pathways, referral criteria, or service specifications for PSNP, CRNP, and/or PDPN?

- If yes, please supply relevant documents or summaries.

These conditions often are diagnosed in our clinic, especially referrals from primary care often do not allow recognition of whether the pain is neuropathic or not. We therefore accept referrals under a chronic pain heading.

- If not, please clarify whether these conditions fall under broader chronic pain, MSK, diabetes, or oncology pathways.

Chronic pain pathway

4. Clinical Guidelines, Protocols, Strategic Plans

Has the Trust developed or contributed to any strategic plans, business cases, or service specifications for PSNP, CRNP, or PDPN?

- If so, please provide relevant documents, including any timelines and associated funding information.

No – this is currently under review

Are there any specific clinical guidelines, care pathways, or treatment protocols in use? For example:

- NICE CG173

- NEUPSIG

- Local pathways for diabetes- or oncology-related neuropathy

- If yes, please provide copies or summaries of key components.

Neuropathic Pain Special Interest Group updated treatment recommendations

NICE CG 173: Neuropathic pain in adults: pharmacological management in non-specialist settings.

Oral and Topical Treatment of Painful Diabetic Polyneuropathy: Practice Guideline Update *American Academy for Neurology

Guideline ``diagnosis and non-interventional therapy of neuropathic pain'' of the German Society of Neurology

5. Funding & Budgets –

What was the total expenditure on neuropathic pain services in the most recent full financial year?

- If no specific figure is available, please provide overall pain management funding and any known distribution (e.g., primary/community vs secondary care).

- Please indicate the type of funding, e.g. tariff or block contract

The information you have requested is exempt under Section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (Commercial Interests).

Disclosure of detailed financial information relating to service expenditure and funding arrangements would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of the Trust and its commissioners, as well as those of current and potential service providers. Revealing the precise costs and funding structures could undermine the Trust's ability to negotiate future contracts and may adversely affect its position in maintaining best value for public money.

This exemption is subject to the public interest test. While the Trust recognises the public interest in transparency and accountability in the use of NHS funds, in this case we consider that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosure. Protecting the Trust's ability to secure best value and maintain fair competition in the market for healthcare services is considered to be of greater overall benefit to the public.

6. Planned or Recent Service Changes

Are there any recent, ongoing, or planned changes to:

- Commissioning arrangements

- Referral pathways

- Service structure

- Clinical treatment options for PSNP, CRNP, or PDPN?

If yes, please provide details, including the relevant sites, timelines, and the rationale for these changes.

The service is currently in discussions with commissioners with regards to reviewing the contract, referral pathways and service structure for the next Financial Year.

7. Data Format and Guidance

Please provide all data in a machine-readable format (e.g., Excel or CSV).

- If any part of the request is unclear or may exceed appropriate cost/time limits, please contact me to discuss refinement, in accordance with Section 16 of the FOI Act.

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/

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