Our Ref:113

May 2026

Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Freedom of Information Act Request

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Dear Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust,

Evacuation and shelter guidance for the NHS in England(1) states that exercising using an evacuation and shelter scenario should be a formal part of an NHS organisation's Emergency Preparedness, Resilience and Response exercise programme. It also states that staff "should be given the opportunity to practice their use of all available evacuation equipment during exercises."

Under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I am writing to request the following information. For clarity I have enumerated the information I am requesting. If you do not hold some of this information then I ask you to confirm explicitly that you do not hold it.

I request:

1. The total number of clinical staff in Trust's Emergency Department(s).

Medical – 100.39 wte
Nursing – 188.73 wte

2. The number of clinical staff in the Trust's Emergency Department(s) who have participated in an evacuation live play exercise.

3. The date(s) of the most recent evacuation live play exercise(s) of the Trust's Emergency Department(s).

Question 2 and 3 Response

Exemption Applied – Section 31(1)(a) and Section 38(1)(b)
The Trust is unable to disclose this information and is applying exemptions under:

- **Section 31(1)(a) – Law Enforcement,** and
- **Section 38(1)(b) – Health and Safety** of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

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Section 31(1)(a) exempts information where disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the prevention or detection of crime. Section 38(1)(b) exempts information where disclosure would, or would be likely to, endanger the safety of any individual.

Rationale

The requested information relates to the Trust's Emergency Preparedness, Resilience and Response (EPRR) arrangements, specifically the scale and timing of evacuation exercise activities within Emergency Departments.

Disclosure of:

- participation levels in evacuation exercises, and
- the timing of recent exercise activity

could provide insight into the Trust's preparedness, capability, and potential vulnerabilities in emergency response arrangements.

When combined with other publicly available information, this could:

- expose gaps in preparedness or operational readiness, and
- increase the risk of malicious exploitation or disruption within a critical healthcare environment.

Public Interest Test

As Sections 31 and 38 are **qualified exemptions**, the Trust has conducted a public interest test.

Factors in favour of disclosure

- Promotes transparency and accountability in how the Trust prepares for emergency situations
- Provides reassurance to the public that appropriate training and exercising is undertaken

Factors against disclosure

- Disclosure could compromise the effectiveness of emergency preparedness arrangements
- Risk of information being used to identify vulnerabilities in Emergency Department operations
- Potential to endanger staff, patients and visitors if security-sensitive preparedness information is exposed

Conclusion

The Trust considers that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

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.

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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/