



FOI REF: 21/048

27<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Eastbourne District General Hospital  
Kings Drive  
Eastbourne  
East Sussex  
BN21 2UD

Tel: 0300 131 4500  
Website: [www.esht.nhs.uk](http://www.esht.nhs.uk)

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

I am responding to your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act. The answers to your specific questions are as follows:

### **How many people have died in your hospitals from Covid19 alone?**

**As in they died only due to Covid19. I can see the figures that you publish online, but these are deaths within 28 days of a positive covid test, so they could have died from other causes. I just want to know the exact figure from 1st February 2020 until the 31st December 2020 of people that have died due to covid19 and not anything else please.**

As we are sure you will appreciate, East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust is facing an unprecedented challenge in managing the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Our teams do not therefore have the capacity to respond to your freedom of information request during this extraordinary period and we apologise that we will not be able to respond.

However, the Trust is counting COVID-19 deaths as per the national guidance. The figure and a description of the definition we are using, is published daily and can be found via the link below:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/covid-19-daily-deaths/>

The link to the Trust level data is available in the daily spreadsheet in the section titled 'COVID-19 all announced deaths'.

Furthermore the Trust does not centrally record the cause of death. To enable the Trust to provide the information requested above would require a manual review of patient death certificates.

Section 12(1) of the Act allows a public authority to refuse to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of compliance would exceed the 'appropriate limit', as defined by the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 (the Regulations). These state that this cost limit is £450 for public authorities which are not part of central government or the armed forces. The costs are calculated at £25 per hour per person regardless of the rate of pay, which means that the limit will be exceeded if the work involved would exceed 18 hours. The Trust estimates that the cost of complying with this request would significantly exceed the above limit.

If I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Should you be dissatisfied with the Trust's response to your request, please write to Lynette Wells, Director of Corporate Affairs, East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust ([lynette.wells2@nhs.net](mailto:lynette.wells2@nhs.net)) quoting the above reference.

Yours sincerely

Linda Thornhill (Mrs)  
Corporate Governance Manager  
[esh-tr.foi@nhs.net](mailto:esh-tr.foi@nhs.net)