

FOI REF: 24/120

7th March 2024

Tel: 0300 131 4500
Website: 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:

I would like to request the answers to the below questions, in relation to your Ophthalmology services at the hospital trust.

WET-AMD INJECTIONS:

- 1) **What is the maximum number of wet-AMD injections you can facilitate in a week?**

The maximum number of injections we can facilitate in a week for wet-AMD is 150 per week (Monday – Friday).

- 2) a) **Do you run out-of-hours lists to keep up with demand for wet-AMD injections?**

The Trust run weekend clinics when there are capacity issues and the patients need to be seen within their timeframe. I would say on average we do an adhoc clinic once a month.

- b) **If you are running additional lists, how are these lists being accommodated?**

The weekend lists are accommodated at our Bexhill Hospital site.

- c) **If you are running additional lists, are you utilising any alternative clinical space?**

No, the Trust utilise our own clinical space.

3) a) **What is the current waiting time for patients to secure an appointment for Wet-AMD injections?**

1 week from receipt of referral.

b) **What was the wait time at the same point in time in 2023?**

As per 3a above.

4) a) **How many patients are currently waiting for an appointment at a wet-AMD clinic?**

None waiting, patients are booked upon the receipt of referral. If there is not enough capacity to meet the required time of 1 week, then the department puts on additional adhoc clinics to meet the required timeframe of one week.

b) **What was the wait time at the same point in time in 2023?**

As per 4a above.

5) a) **Do you have a contingency plan to increase capacity should this be required?**

We are expanding our clinical footprint at Bexhill Hospital, which will create more capacity for the medical retina service. This development will be completed end of September 2024. The next stage is to recruit more staff.

b) **If so, what is your contingency plan for wet-AMD injections?**

Contingency plan is to undertake adhocs during the week or at the weekends so that we will still maintain the waiting times and needs of the patients.

GENERAL CAPACITY:

6) **Are you outsourcing any ophthalmology clinical work to external parties or utilising insourcing partners? If so, what?**

No.

7) **What condition takes up the majority of your clinical slots?**

Glaucoma and Medical Retina are our two largest areas in terms of current demand and backlog of patients to be seen.

8) **Would you consider a mobile unit as an option to expand services and capacity?**

The right of access created by the Freedom of Information Act only applies to recorded information. The opinions requested above are not recorded and we are unable to divulge unrecorded opinions on these matters.

9) What is the name and contact details of the Ophthalmology Service Lead?

Mr Pantelis Ioannidis
Ophthalmology Clinical Lead

We are unable to provide the contact details of staff as we consider this information to be exempt from release in accordance with section 44 of the Freedom of Information Act (Prohibition on disclosure) and would refer to the Privacy and Electronic Communications EC Directive Regulations 2003 which provide specific rules on electronic communication services, including marketing (by phone, fax, email or text) and keeping communications services secure. We will not provide any information that could result in the transmission of unsolicited communications which may place an unacceptable risk to our email network and could also have a detrimental impact on patient care and treatment.

The contact number for the Trust are accessible on the Trust website <http://www.esht.nhs.uk>.

This is an absolute exemption and there is, therefore, no requirement to consider the public interest.

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, you have the right to request an internal review. Please write to the Freedom of Information Department (esh-tr.foi@nhs.net), quoting the above reference, within 40 working days. The Trust is not obliged to accept an internal review after this date.

Should you still be dissatisfied with your FOI request, you have the right of complaint to the Information Commissioner at the following address:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Department
esh-tr.foi@nhs.net