Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – CATARCT SURGERY

I write in response to your request for information in relation to cataract surgery within NHS Lothian.

Question:
1. What is the current waiting time for cataract surgery in NHS Lothian?

Answer:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>New Outpatient</th>
<th>Inpatient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urgent</td>
<td>7.7 weeks</td>
<td>5.6 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routine</td>
<td>11.7 weeks</td>
<td>9.3 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined Total</td>
<td>10.6 weeks</td>
<td>8.9 weeks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question:
2. What volume of patients are currently waiting beyond target for cataract surgery?
3. Has this volume (Q2) risen or fallen in the last three years? Please provide volumes for the last three years if possible.

Answer:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>August 2014</th>
<th>August 2015</th>
<th>August 2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outpatients</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Waiting List</td>
<td>1163</td>
<td>1207</td>
<td>993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beyond Target</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Beyond Target</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>August 2014</th>
<th>August 2015</th>
<th>August 2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inpatients</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Waiting List</td>
<td>860</td>
<td>820</td>
<td>811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beyond Target</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>&lt;5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Beyond Target</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To protect the identity of the individuals involved any figure of 5 or less has not been shown in this response. Since we do not have their consent to release this data from their records, the information is exempt under section 38 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act i.e. to provide it would breach the 7th Principle of the Data Protection Act 1998.
Question:
4. Are patients who wait beyond waiting list target outsourced to another trust, for example, Golden Jubilee (GJNH)? What is the current process for this?

Answer:
All patients who are deemed clinically suitable to have their treatment at GJNH are identified when they are added to the outpatient waiting list. NHS Lothian has access to 2,660 clinic slots and 1,850 theatre slots at GJNH in 2016/17. Patients who have been identified as suitable are contacted in turn and offered the opportunity to have their treatment at GJNH. NHS Lothian’s local access policy has confirmed that GJNH is a reasonable location for patients to be offered treatment so if a patient declines a “reasonable offer package”, they will be advised that they will remain on the waiting list and will be treated in an NHS Lothian hospital, but that their waiting time clock will be reset.

Question:
5. If patients are offered other locations for surgery (Q4), what is the cost per patient and the annual cost for this to NHS Lothian?

Answer:
The only location offered for cataract treatment outside NHS Lothian is GJNH. The cost per patient is £514 and the annual anticipated cost in 2016/17 is £951,000.

Question:
6. What is NHS Lothian currently doing to reduce waiting list times for cataract surgery? Has funding been made available to assist with this?

Answer:
- Review of outpatient cataract assessment process and documentation to facilitate an increase in capacity from 12 to 15 patients per session in all dedicated cataract assessment clinics.
- All operating sessions increased by 30 minutes which for dedicated cataract lists will see an increase of one additional patient per list.
- As part of the reprovision of Princess Alexandra Eye Pavilion - NHS Lothian are planning to open 4 theatres (and increase of one) - with at least one of the four forming part of a High Volume Cataract Unit.
- On-going work to redesign ward 20 at St John's Hospital, which would allow an increase in capacity by an additional three surgical sessions per week.

Additional funding has been provided to support this.

Question:
7. Is there a Scottish Government initiative to assist the health board in reducing cataract surgery waiting times?

Answer:

The Scottish Government are supporting NHS Lothian in carrying out a ‘test of change’ to see if ‘double scrub’ is feasible which would increase the volume of cataract surgeries carried out.

Question:

8. Are there any other critical issues effecting NHS Lothian's ability to reduce cataract surgery waiting times?

Answer:

No critical issues, however the current layout of existing hospital limits expansion.

Question:

9. Are there guidelines within NHS Lothian for when a cataract needs to be addressed by surgery? What is the criteria for surgery referral? If guidelines are available, can a copy be included with the response?

Answer:

The cataract referral guideline is enclosed with this response.

Question:

10. Will the planned new eye hospital at the new Royal be PFI?

Answer:

This will not be a PFI project (PFI is no-longer used). No procurement route has been identified, but the working assumption for NHS Lothian at present is that a capital procurement is the appropriate route, funding permitting.

I hope the information provided helps with your request.

If you are unhappy with our response to your request, you do have the right to request us to review it. Your request should be made within 40 working days of receipt of this letter, and we will reply within 20 working days of receipt. If our decision is unchanged following a review and you remain dissatisfied with this, you then have the right to make a formal complaint to the Scottish Information Commissioner within 6 months of receipt of our Review response. You then have the option to proceed to the Court of Sessions if dissatisfied with the Commissioner's decision.

If you require a review of our decision to be carried out, please write to the FOI Reviewer at the address at the head of this letter. The review will be undertaken by a Reviewer who was not involved in the original decision-making process.
FOI responses (subject to redaction of personal information) may appear on NHS Lothian’s Freedom of Information website at:
http://www.nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk/YourRights/FOI/Pages/default.aspx

Yours sincerely

JANIS BUTLER
Interim Director of Human Resources
Cc: Chief Executive
Enc.
The cataract is thought to be the dominant cause of their visual dysfunction, the best corrected vision is worse than 6/12 and the patient accepts a 2% risk of their vision being worsened by the operation.

Does the patient have at least one of the following criteria:

1. Near vision is worse than N8 (i.e. N10 or worse in the cataract eye)
2. Clinically significant index myopia?
3. Clinically significant surgically induced anisometropia (following first eye cataract surgery)
4. Significant glare is present e.g. unable to drive
5. Where activities vital to daily living would otherwise cease, unable to drive, to do job, to be a carer, other?

Refer

If none of the above criteria are met

Do not Refer