

FOI 3578

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 – INFORMATION REQUEST

Q1. How many patients were treated by the rheumatology department in the past 3 months with the following:

- Tocilizumab – for any disease
- Tocilizumab for rheumatoid arthritis (RA) only
- Tocilizumab for giant cell arteritis (GCA) only

Response: Current patients as of 22/01/26

- Tocilizumab – for any disease - 60
- Tocilizumab for rheumatoid arthritis (RA) only - 40
- Tocilizumab for giant cell arteritis (GCA) only - 18

Q2. How many patients were treated by the ophthalmology department (for any disease) in the past 3 months with Tocilizumab?

Response:

This information is not recorded centrally and therefore retrieving it would involve a manual search of individual patient records. As such we cannot provide this information as the cost of locating and retrieving the information exceeds the “appropriate limit” as stated in the Freedom of Information (Fees and Appropriate Limit) Regulations 2004. In order to obtain this information from a number of individual patient records would exceed the £450 limit and is therefore cost prohibitive.

Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Public Authorities are not obliged to comply with an information request where to do so would exceed the cost limit.

In addition, it would not be appropriate to search through individual patient records for the purposes for responding to a FOI request, there would be no patient expectation that medical records would be used in this way.

Furthermore, under Section 16 of the Freedom of Information Act, we can advise that it would require an extensive manual review of all patient charts just to ascertain if information relevant to your request is held. As such, we advise that there is no way to refine this request to bring it within the appropriate limit.

Q3. How many patients were treated in A&E in the past 3 months for giant cell arteritis (GCA) with Tocilizumab?

Response: This information is not recorded centrally and therefore retrieving it would involve a manual search of individual patient records. As such we cannot provide this information as the cost of locating and retrieving the information exceeds the “appropriate limit” as stated in the Freedom of Information (Fees and Appropriate Limit) Regulations 2004. In order to obtain this information from a number of individual patient records would exceed the £450 limit and is therefore cost prohibitive.

Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Public Authorities are not obliged to comply with an information request where to do so would exceed the cost limit.

In addition, it would not be appropriate to search through individual patient records for the purposes for responding to a FOI request, there would be no patient expectation that medical records would be used in this way.

Furthermore, under Section 16 of the Freedom of Information Act, we can advise that it would require an extensive manual review of all patient charts just to ascertain if information relevant to your request is held. As such, we advise that there is no way to refine this request to bring it within the appropriate limit.

Q4. In the past 3 months, how many patients with a primary diagnosis of GCA (ICD10 codes M31.5 or M31.6) were:

- **Admitted as an inpatient**
- **Treated in A&E**
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Response:

Please refer to attachment 1 for number of patient’s admitted as inpatients with a primary diagnosis of GCA in the past 3 months. Please note that we do not admit any Ophthalmology patients as in-patients. If an Ophthalmology patient requires an in-patient admission this would be in Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast.

You may wish to contact Belfast Health & Social Care Trust for this specific information.

Please refer to attachment 2 for number of patient’s treated in A&E with a primary diagnosis of GCA in the past 3 months.



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