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30th January 2025

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Join today: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

Dear Sir/Madam

Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000 - Request for Information Reference: Reducing Noise at night and patient mealtimes

I am writing in response to your request for information under the FOI 2000.

I can confirm in accordance with Section 1 (1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 that we do hold some of the information you have requested. A response to each part of your request is provided below. Please accept our sincere apologies for the delay.

Home, Community, Hospital.

FOI Request / Question	Question Response	Is there an exemption?	Exemption	Exemption Details
1. What improvements have been made to reduce noise levels from other patients at night?		Yes	PFI	The contract for this service falls under the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contract held by Central Nottinghamshire Hospitals and their hard and soft services providers. The cost of these soft services are covered within the total unitary charge payment under the Private Finance Initiative for all services and as such cannot be separated as an individual cost as the contract is interdependent. Further details of the unitary charge payments are available here: https://www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk/about-us/finances/what-we-spend-and-how-we-spend-it/
2. What improvements have been made to reduce noise levels from staff at night?	We remind and encourage staff to keep noise levels to a minimum during the night when patients are trying to sleep and are recovering from surgery. The senior nursing team undertake out of hours visits which usually commence at 04:00 am. During these visits the noise levels have always been found to be kept to a minimum. 50% of the beds within our wards are cubicles so there is the option to close the doors to reduce exposure to ward activity noise if required and if safe to do so for the patient.			

3. Do you use noise monitoring equipment in all wards? Yes/No. If yes – has this had an impact on reducing noise levels in all wards at night? If no - do you have any plans to introduce noise monitoring equipment?	We do not use noise monitoring equipment in the surgical wards at Sherwood Forest Hospitals. We do not currently have plans to use such equipment. We can access ear plugs for patients if they are required but this is not something that is generally requested.			
4. What improvements have been made to improve ward lighting at night to help patients sleep?		Yes	PFI	As per Q1
5. What processes are in place to support patients at mealtimes needing	We have mealtime volunteers who are supporting several adult inpatient areas currently as part of a pilot. This is gradually being rolled out across all three sites and has been showing some encouraging results through our place audits. This is ongoing work at present, but volunteers assist with preparing for meals,			

help? eg mealtime assistants?	opening packages, and assisting with eating and drinking, they also undertake a specific training session to be able to carry out this role.			
6. How do patients get food outside regular mealtimes?	Hostess service is in inpatient areas for 11 hours a day and would provide additional meals outside of mealtimes. Out of hours, ward staff contact the FM helpdesk and request patient food which the Soft Services provider then take to the area.			

I trust this information answers your request. Should you have any further enquiries or queries about this response please do not hesitate to contact me. However, if you are unhappy with the way in which your request has been handled, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to: Sally Brook Shanahan, Director of Corporate Affairs, King's Mill Hospital, Mansfield Road, Sutton in Ashfield, Nottinghamshire, NG17 4JL or email sally.brookshanahan@nhs.net.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the internal review, you can apply to the Information Commissioner's Office, who will consider whether we have complied with our obligations under the Act and can require us to remedy any problems. Generally, the Information Commissioner's Office cannot decide unless you have exhausted the internal review procedure. You can find out more about how to do this, and about the Act in general, on the Information Commissioner's Office website at: <https://ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/official-information/>.

Complaints to the Information Commissioner's Office should be sent to FOI/EIR Complaints Resolution, Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Telephone 0303 1231113, email casework@ico.org.uk.

If you would like this letter or information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call us on 01623 672232 or email sfh-tr.foi.requests@nhs.net.

Yours faithfully

Information Governance Team

All information we have provided is subject to the provisions of the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015. Accordingly, if the information has been made available for re-use under the [Open Government Licence](#) (OGL) a request to re-use is not required, but the licence conditions must be met. You must not re-use any previously unreleased information without having the consent from Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. Should you wish to re-use previously unreleased information then you must make your request in writing. All requests for re-use will be responded to within 20 working days of receipt.

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