

Request under Freedom of Information Act 2000

Thank you for your request for information which we received on 12 October 2018.

I am pleased to confirm the following.

1. Has the Trust used private debt collection firms to recoup money owed by overseas visitors, migrants and former UK residents who were charged for NHS healthcare treatment by the Trust?

Yes

2. Has the Trust sold debts owed by overseas visitors, migrants and former UK residents - who were charged for NHS healthcare treatment by the Trust - to private debt collection firms?

No

If the answer to questions 1 and 2 is 'No', the Trust need not process the remainder of this request.

3. Which private debt collection firms has the Trust used for the purposes referred to in question 1?

CCI

4. Which private debt collection firms has the Trust sold debts to as per question 2?

N/A

5a. The debts of how many overseas visitors, migrants and former UK residents (excluding private patients) did the Trust pass on or sell to private debt collection firms each calendar year for 2016, 2017 and 2018?

2016: 44

2017: 55

2018: 52

5b. Please state the combined debt owed for each year's referrals/sales as per question 5a

2016: £118K

2017: £140K

2018: £173K

Combined debt for 2016, 2017, and 2018 is £431K

6. What value of the debts referred to each year in response to question 5b has been recouped to date?

2016: £7K
2017: 13K
2018: 9K

7. Please provide any information the Trust holds on the conditions the patients referred to in response to question 5a were treated for (this may be provided as categories of healthcare, such as ENT and nephrology), or alternatively the treatments that were subject to the imposed charges (these may be grouped into over-arching categories for data protection reasons)

The Trust does not record this information in a central location. To obtain this information would entail trawling through patient records which would require permission and exceed the appropriate time limit.

8. Please state what policies the Trust operates (or requires debt collection firms to operate) with regard to safeguarding vulnerable individuals when transferring or selling to debt collection firms the debts of overseas visitors, migrants and former UK residents who were charged for NHS healthcare treatment by the Trust

The Trust follows the data protection laws and once the debt has been passed to debt collection, the agency will consult with the Trust regarding each step of the collection process and also pass on any information they have. If debtors are vulnerable or there are any other welfare issues which they have concerns about regarding collecting payment, then we will review and advice accordingly.

You are advised that this information is provided in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and is for your personal use. Any re-use of this information will be subject to copyright and the Re-Use of Public Sector Information Regulations (1st July 05) and authorisation from Milton Keynes Hospital NHS Foundation Trust will be required. In the event of any re-use, the information must be reproduced accurately and not used in a misleading manner.

If you are unhappy with the information received in response to this request, please address your complaint to the Patient Affairs Office at Milton Keynes Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Standing Way, Eaglestone, Milton Keynes MK6 5LD. If, after exhausting our internal process, you are still unhappy with the information received, you may write to the Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.

If you need any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us at the address above.

Yours sincerely,

Freedom Of Information Co-ordinator
For and on behalf of Milton Keynes Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Any re-use of this information will be subject to the
'Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations' and best practice.