

**Reference Number:** FOI202425/487  
**From:** Other  
**Date:** 03 February 2025  
**Subject:** Voluntary discharge information

**Q1** The number of patients who voluntarily discharged themselves from the hospital over the past three years (2021-2024)

**A1** 69 patients

**Q2** Please specify if this is due to long wait times or delays in treatment

**A2** Information not held – the Trust does not routinely collate or hold this information centrally as part of its management or performance data. In order to confirm the reasons as to why a patient voluntarily discharged themselves, the Trust would be required to access personal data of the individuals and as such the data is exempt under Section 40: Personal data

**Q3** If available, please provide any breakdown of this data by department or type of treatment, if applicable

<b>A3</b>	<b>Local Subspecialty Description</b>	<b>Patients</b>
	ACHD MEDICAL	Information exempted under Section 40: Personal data. Providing this information would likely identify individuals involved
	ACHD SURGICAL	Information exempted under Section 40: Personal data. Providing this information would likely identify individuals involved
	ADULT CYSTIC FIBROSIS	5
	AORTIC SURGERY	Information exempted under Section 40: Personal data. Providing this information would likely identify individuals involved
	CARDIAC SURGERY	7
	CARDIOLOGY	14
	EBUS	Information exempted under Section 40: Personal data. Providing this information would likely identify individuals involved
	HEART RHYTHM	8
	ICC - CARDIOLOGY	Information exempted under Section 40: Personal data. Providing this information would likely identify individuals involved
	INTERVENTION - CARDIOLOGY	22
	RESPIRATORY MEDICINE	Information exempted under Section 40: Personal data. Providing this information would likely identify individuals involved
	THORACIC SURGERY	6

The Trust is unable to respond to all or specific elements of your request where the response would indicate five or less individuals. The Trust is withholding this information under Section 40 (Personal Information) of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000 to reduce the risk of any individuals being identified. The Trust is of the view that disclosure of such information would significantly increase the risk of individuals being identified and as such would constitute a breach of their personal data.

The Trust has applied exemption Section 40(2) of the FOIA and is therefore withholding the information as disclosure which may identify an individual would breach their rights under the Data Protection Act 2018. The grounds for application of this exemption include:

- Any data relating to patients or staff is third party data, furthermore health data is classified as sensitive personal data within the Data Protection Act 2018. As such, Section 40 (2) of the FOIA applies along with the Trusts duty of confidentiality. Therefore under s.2 (3) (f) (ii) of the FOIA, there is an absolute exemption from disclosure on the grounds that it would contravene the First Data Protection Principle.
- The Trust has a duty under the Data Protection Act 2018 and specifically the First Data Protection Principle to ensure personal data regarding staff and patients is processed fairly and lawfully. Disclosure of such data which may identify an individual, either through the data alone or other data in conjunction with that data which may identify an individual would therefore breach this principle.
- The Data Protection Act 2018 defines sensitive personal data to include data relating to the “physical or mental health or condition” of a person. Any such information about specific individuals falls within this category and disclosure of such data including statistical data, with any potential likelihood of identification would breach the Data Protection Act 2018.

**Q4** Any related statistics or records on patients who left the hospital against medical advice, particularly where delays or wait times were a contributing factor

**A4** Information not held – the Trust does not routinely collate or hold this information centrally as part of its management or performance data. In order to confirm the reasons as to why a patient voluntarily discharged themselves, the Trust would be required to access personal data of the individuals and as such the data is exempt under Section 40: Personal data.