

Ref: FOI/CAD/ID 3787

**Please reply to:**  
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Trust Management  
Service Centre  
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ME16 9QQ  
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14 February 2017

### **Freedom of Information Act 2000**

I am writing in response to your request for information made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in relation to Public Health funerals.

- 1. Has the Trust conducted any Public Health Act funerals since 01/01/16 to the present (up to and including the date of your response)?*
- 2. If the answer to this question is yes, please disclose for each:*
  - a) The full name of the deceased*
  - b) The date of birth of the deceased*
  - c) The date of death of the deceased*
  - d) The last known address of the deceased*
  - e) Whether details of the estate have been/will be or are likely to be referred to the Government Legal Department, if known.*
- 3. Have there been any similar FOI requests to this (within the time period outlined in question 1)?*
- 4. Within the time period outlined in question 1, has the Trust ever used a genealogist, family researcher, 'heir hunter' or similar company to try to locate the next of kin of a deceased person for whom the Trust has taken responsibility for conducting a public health funeral? If so, which research company has been used?*

1. Yes
- 2.

The Trust will not provide the information requested in Q2 as this may provide sufficient information to allow for the patient to be identified.

You will also appreciate that patient identifiable information is, by its very nature, owed a duty of confidence, the disclosure of which would constitute a breach of confidence actionable by that or any other person. Section 41 (FOI) provides an absolute exemption for information meeting this definition. Whilst health records relating to deceased people do not carry a common law duty of confidentiality, it is Department of Health and General Medical Council policy that records relating to deceased people should be treated with the same level

of confidentiality as those relating to living people. Access to the health records of a deceased person is governed by the Access to Health Records Act 1990.

3. No

4. Yes – Estate Research