

Ref: FOI/GS/ID 5818

Please reply to:
FOI Administrator
Trust Management
Maidstone Hospital
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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.

You asked:

- 1. Does your NHS Trust organise, pay for and carry out public health funerals for people who die in the trust's care and who don't have the financial means or family/friends to arrange it?*
- 2. If no, which local council you refer public health funeral deaths to?*
- 3. If yes, please supply the following information (please see the attached spreadsheet I have put together to help you collate the data):*
 - a) How many public health funerals has your NHS Trust carried out each year for these financial years: 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/2019?*
 - b) Please state, out of the above figures, how many of those people were male and how many of those men had next of kin and how many of those men did not have next of kin?*
 - c) Please state, out of the above figures, how many of those people were female and how many of those women had next of kin and how many of those women did not have next of kin?*
 - d) Please state, out of the above figures, how many of those people were aged under 18, aged 18-59 or aged 60+*
 - e) Please state, out of the above figures, how many of those people were cremated, how many were buried in a grave of their own and how many were buried in a shared or communal grave (if that's applicable).*
- f) Please state, the net cost to the NHS Trust for all financial years: 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/2019?*

Trust response:

1. Yes
2. Not applicable

3.

a, e & f. – Please see the following table

Please note the Trust does not carry out burials using a shared or communal grave.

Year	Net Cost	Number	Burials	Own grave	Shared grave	Cremations
2011/12	£ 42,750.00	Year not recorded in full	0	Always	Never shared	8 (Of recorded)
2012/13	£ 24,807.00	5	0	Always	Never shared	5
2013/14	£ 52,305.00	13	0	Always	Never shared	13
2014/15	£ 29,729.00	6	0	Always	Never shared	5
2015/16	£ 49,627.00	11	1	Always	Never shared	10
2016/17	£ 29,596.00	4	0	Always	Never shared	4
2017/18	£ 35,256.00	7	0	Always	Never shared	7
2018/19	£32,976.00	14	0	Always	Never shared	14

b, c & d.

The Trust will not provide the information requested 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.