

Ref: FOI/GS/ID 6787

Please reply to:
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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 Covid-19 and suicide deaths.

You asked:

I would like to know how many people died of covid-19 in this trust with no pre-existing health conditions from march 2020 until present and how many suicide deaths you have had vs the same time frame can I also have this in age breakdown please.

Trust response:

1.

The Trust does not hold the information related to patient death in the level of detail requested.

The Trust is able to advise how many patients have died in hospital with no comorbidities (including obesity) detailed on their death certificates i.e., death certificates that are clean except for Covid 19 recorded in section 1a (please see below). It should be noted that this data may not accurately respond to the question asked.

<u>Months</u>	<u>T/Wells</u>	<u>Maidstone</u>
Jan 2020	0	0
Feb	0	0
March	1	0
April	3	5
May	3	1
June	4	0
July	0	0
Aug	0	0
Sept	0	0

Oct	0	0
Nov	2	1
Dec	3	9
Jan 2021	10	17
Feb	2	3
March	0	1
April	0	0

Consensus expert view would need to be taken with many comorbidities due to the varying clinical opinions on existing health conditions / clinical evidence / scientific data to decide whether any co-morbidities were contributory to the cause of death or not. Such review of individual patients would take longer than the appropriate limit to complete. The appropriate limit is specified in regulations and represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3½ working days in determining whether the Trust holds the information, locating, retrieving and extracting the information. Under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 the Trust is not obliged to comply with your request.

COVID-19 deaths are recorded by the Trust as per national guidance. The figure, and a description of the definition we are using, is published daily and can be found via the link below:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/covid-19-daily-deaths/>

The link to the Trust level data is available in the daily spreadsheet in the section titled 'COVID-19 all announced deaths'.

Please note that we are providing these links under Section 21 of the FOI Act – 'Information reasonably accessible to the applicant via other means'.

2. If a patient commits suicide at home and are successful an ambulance will be called but this will not come to the hospital and therefore not in our data. Likewise if suicide is attempted but not successful and they do come to A&E, we are unable to identify attempted suicide in A&E data as the A&E coding will show the problem not the cause, i.e. diagnosis of poisoning in A&E could be used for example where a person ingested something to try and commit suicide, but the fact that it was an attempted suicide would not form part of the A&E diagnosis so we could not identify this, and ICD10 coding is not used in A&E.

Many who go through A&E will not be admitted, but where they are admitted and of those which have the F12 code specified which we can only pick these up when looking at admitted patients, we still can only use the X60-X84 to identify the self-harm but still cannot be clear that the intention was to kill themselves.

We have also been advised that the accident codes for suicide etc. (which is the X60-X84) are very rarely seen on patient's notes because the patients do not reach the wards in time.

Further information on a National level can be found using the following website links:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/searchpublication?q=suicide>

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/datasets/standardofproofsuicidedata>

Please note that we are providing these links under Section 21 of the FOI Act.