

Ref no: 001110518
From: Commercial
Date: 11/05/18
Subject: Policies & MOUs NHS charging of overseas visitors

REQUEST

I make the following requests in respect of documents/information held by your NHS trust. If you are managing Freedom of Information Act disclosures on behalf of more than one NHS trust please treat this request as a request for information from each and every NHS trust for which you are responsible.

You will be aware of the NHS (Charges to Overseas Visitors) Regulations 2015 as amended by the NHS (Charges to Overseas Visitors) (Amendment) Regulations 2017. All requests for information below relate to your implementation of these regulations, and particularly, though not exclusively, the requirement to charge up-front for treatment where individuals are not eligible for free treatment, and the concomitant requirements to identify chargeable visitors and to consider whether they are exempt from charging, or whether their care is immediately necessary or urgent.

Please consider the following three requests:

1. The [disclosure of a Home Office document](#) has revealed that at least 16 NHS trusts have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Home Office in order to prevent 'upfront access to healthcare to which illegal migrants are not entitled'.
 - a. Has your NHS trust entered into such an MoU?
 - b. Please provide a copy of the MoU if so..

2. The same document reveals that at least 20 NHS trusts have been visited by Home Office Local Partnership managers to establish 'robust immigration status checking systems'.
 - a. Has your NHS trust had such a visit?
 - b. Please provide details of any such visit or visits including, but not limited to:
 - i. Agendas of any meetings with Home Office Local Partnership managers;

- ii. Minutes of any such meetings, if available;
 - iii. Documents/information packs/brochures/training materials/guidance relating to the visit or visits or created as a result of engagement with Home Office Local Partnership managers.
 - c. Please provide documents/guidance/procedures as to the immigration status checking system that you have in place.
- 3. Please also provide documents or information as to efforts that have been made to discharge the Trust's public sector equality duty in implementing the regulations. These would usually include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Equality impact assessments;
 - b. Delivery of training to staff on implementation and avoiding discrimination;
 - c. Written policies and guidance on implementation of the charging regime;
 - d. Systems to monitor the impact of the charging regime on your service users, particularly those belonging to BME groups, foreign nationals, or those with other protected characteristics and any findings from such monitoring.

RESPONSE

1. The [disclosure of a Home Office document](#) has revealed that at least 16 NHS trusts have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Home Office in order to prevent 'upfront access to healthcare to which illegal migrants are not entitled'.
 - a. Has your NHS trust entered into such an MoU?
 - b. Please provide a copy of the MoU if so.

No, the Trust has not entered into such an MoU.

2. The same document reveals that at least 20 NHS trusts have been visited by Home Office Local Partnership managers to establish 'robust immigration status checking systems'.
 - a. Has your NHS trust had such a visit?

No, the Trust was not selected for such a visit.

b. Please provide details of any such visit or visits including, but not limited to:

i. Agendas of any meetings with Home Office Local Partnership managers;

N/A

ii. Minutes of any such meetings, if available;

N/A

iii. Documents/information packs/brochures/training materials/guidance relating to the visit or visits or created as a result of engagement with Home Office Local Partnership managers.

The Trust arranged an informal visit with a Local Partnership Manager for the North West in April 2018 for some guidance around implementing overseas visitors identification processes. The guidance given was to seek support from the Cost Recovery Support Team and shared practice from other anonymised local Trusts.

c. Please provide documents/guidance/procedures as to the immigration status checking system that you have in place.

The procedure is that the Private Patients and Overseas Visitors Coordinator emails the Home Office requesting status verification for a possible chargeable overseas visitor providing full justification (Law /Act) as to why this personal data information is required. The completed request for is emailed to the Evidence and Enquiry Workforce Team with EEREQUEST in the subject field of the email. I have attached the guidance document and request form we use as a Trust.

3. Please also provide documents or information as to efforts that have been made to discharge the Trust's public sector equality duty in implementing the regulations. These would usually include, but are not limited to:

a. Equality impact assessments;

The Private Patients & Overseas Visitor Policy has had an equality impact assessment completed/attached at the back of the policy.

b. Delivery of training to staff on implementation and avoiding discrimination;

Frontline staff are asked that each and every patient is asked the same baseline question: 'Have you lived in the UK for the last 12 months?' to avoid discrimination.

- c. Written policies and guidance on implementation of the charging regime;

The Trust has a Private Patients & Overseas Visitor Policy explaining the procedures for identifying potential overseas visitors that are not eligible for free NHS care.

- d. Systems to monitor the impact of the charging regime on your service users, particularly those belonging to BME groups, foreign nationals, or those with other protected characteristics and any findings from such monitoring.

The Trust does not currently monitor the impact of the charging regime on specific service users.