

Freedom of Information request 69-17

Request

I am seeking the following information under the Freedom of Information Act

Public Health England defines an outbreak as:

- an incident in which two or more people experiencing a similar illness are linked in time or place
- a greater than expected rate of infection compared with the usual background rate for the place and time where the outbreak has occurred
- a single case for certain rare diseases such as diphtheria, botulism, rabies, viral haemorrhagic fever or polio
- a suspected, anticipated or actual event involving microbial or chemical contamination of food or water

1. Please specify how your trust defines an outbreak.
2. In the last five years, please list each outbreak the trust has declared due to the following organisms:

- Vancomycin-resistant enterococci
- Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA)
- Extended-spectrum β -lactamase (ESBLs) producing Gram-negative bacteria
- -Carbapenem resistant enterobacteriaceae
- -Carbapenemase producing organism
- -Drug resistant Acinetobacter
- -Drug resistant pseudomonas

3. For each case please specify

- The organism causing the outbreak (eg for carbapenemase producing organisms specify Klebsiella pneumoniae carbapenemase)
- Date the outbreak was declared and date it was declared over
- Number of confirmed cases and number of probable cases
- Description of control measures, eg whether wards were closed, patients put in isolation rooms, hydrogen peroxide vapour used to clean rooms etc. For ward closures please give details of ward type and size (eg 30-bed renal ward)
- Whether the outbreak was reported to Public Health England, and if so, the date it was reported
- Date audit report, outbreak investigation, infection control committee report (or equivalent report) was published
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- Number of bed days lost
- Number of patient deaths

If all this information is recorded in the audit report/ infection control committee report (or equivalent report) then please simply attach this document for each outbreak

Response

1. NHS Borders uses Health Protection Scotland (HPS) guidance in relation to infection incidents and outbreaks including definition:-

“A hospital infection incident is defined as:

Any outbreak, i.e. 2 or more persons with the same infection which appears to have arisen from the same source, or where there are more cases than expected in a given area over a specified time period.

An exceptional infection episode. In practical terms this is not every individual patient who, for example, develops a severe Clostridium difficile infection, but infections that are exceptional to any given patient or within a given clinical environment.

An infection incident where there is/could be significant public concern or public health impact.”

2. 2012 – Nil return
2013 – Nil return
2014 – Nil return
2015 – Nil return
2016 - Drug resistant pseudomonas outbreak
3. The organism causing the outbreak (eg for carbapenemase producing organisms specify Klebsiella pneumoniae carbapenemase):
Pseudomonas aeruginosa

Date the outbreak was declared and date it was declared over:
May 2016 – August 2016

Number of confirmed cases and number of probable cases:
<5 confirmed cases

Description of control measures, eg whether wards were closed, patients put in isolation rooms, hydrogen peroxide vapour used to clean rooms etc. For ward closures please give details of ward type and size (eg 30-bed renal ward):
Transmission based infection control precautions

Whether the outbreak was reported to Public Health England, and if so, the date it was reported:
No. Reported to Health Protection Scotland 3 June 2016

Date audit report, outbreak investigation, infection control committee report (or equivalent report) was published:
Report to be published in 2017

Number of bed days lost:
Zero

Number of patient deaths:
<5 patient deaths

Please note that as NHS Borders is such a small Board the number of incidents is very small, and to provide further details of these could allow individuals to be identified and we would be in breach of the Data Protection Act 1998. We are therefore withholding all other data under Section 38(2)(ii) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. This is also in accordance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics any number that is less than five, actual numbers and potentially identifiable information is withheld to help maintain patient confidentiality due to potential risk of disclosure. Further information is available in the ISD Statistical Disclosure Control Protocol.

If you are not satisfied with the way your request has been handled or the decision given, you may ask NHS Borders to review its actions and the decision. If you would like to request a review please apply in writing to, Freedom of Information Review, NHS Borders, Room 2EC3, Education Centre, Borders General Hospital, Melrose, TD6 9BS or foi.enquiries@borders.scot.nhs.uk.

The request for a review should include your name and address for correspondence, the request for information to which the request relates and the issue which you wish to be reviewed. Please state the reference number **69-17** on this request. Your request should be made within 40 working days from receipt of this letter.

If following this review, you remain dissatisfied with the outcome, you may appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner and request an investigation of your complaint. Your request to the Scottish Information Commissioner should be in writing (or other permanent form), stating your name and an address for correspondence. You should provide the details of the request and your reasons for dissatisfaction with both the original response by NHS Borders and your reasons for dissatisfaction with the outcome of the internal review. Your application for an investigation by the Scottish Information Commissioner must be made within

six months of your receipt of the response with which you are dissatisfied. The address for the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner is, Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, Fife.