

Our Ref: NG/RM/24442
Date: 13th January 2025

Nicola Griffiths
Deputy Director of Governance
North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust
Lawton House
Bellringer Road
Trentham
ST4 8HH

Reception: 0300 123 1535

Dear

Freedom of Information Act Request

I am writing in response to your e-mail of the 20th December 2024. Your request has been processed using the Trust's procedures for the disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000).

Requested information:

Under the Freedom of Information act (2000), I would like to request information in relation to the following questions:

1. Does the Trust have guidelines on translation and interpreting? **No**
2. If so, please could you share the guidelines/ policy? **N/A**
3. Does the Trust offer (separate) guidance for multilingual members of staff in regard to translation and interpreting? **Staff with international language skills who come forward as volunteers to participate on our international languages register (see 5 below also) receive an email to explain expectations as below.**

Informal communication support (international languages)

The Trust maintains a voluntary register of colleagues with other languages who have kindly stepped forward to offer informal communication support when needed via our International Languages Communication Register. This may be beneficial for times when informal assistance is required, including:

- addressing an immediate presenting communication barrier.
- assisting to settle someone into an inpatient environment.
- ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place for communicating when language support is not available (e.g. a picture board or iPad with access to Google Translate).
- providing occasional conversation and company for a patient or service user who is non- or limited-English speaking.
- proof reading/ sense-checking a digitally translated document such as a service information leaflet.

Providing informal communication support does not in any way remove the responsibility for us to arrange for an appropriately qualified interpreter for patient/ service user appointments and assessments. Rather, it is an additional means of ensuring that individuals receive personalised care and support, helping to avoid or reduce feelings of isolation and vulnerability. Our formal telephone interpretation services are accessible around the clock and should be utilised for supporting appointments and assessments. Communication support may supplement these usual processes, to support quality of care experience for the individual, or in the event of other arrangements breaking down or not being available, it may provide emergency initial assistance until formal arrangements can be made.

4. If so, please could you share the guidelines/ policy? **N/A**
5. Does the Trust hold a database or record of languages spoken by staff? **As per question 3 above, the Trust has a voluntary register of staff who speak international languages and who are willing to provide occasional communications support (not a replacement for interpretation and translation services in any way).**
6. Does the Trust employ in-house interpreters? **No**

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review of the management of your request. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to: Dr Buki Adeyemo, Chief Executive, North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare Trust, Trust Headquarters, Lawton House, Bellringer Road, Trentham, ST4 8HH. If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely



Nicola Griffiths
Deputy Director of Governance