

Our Ref: NG/RM/26105
Date: 1st May 2026

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 15th April 2026. Your request has been processed using the Trust's procedures for the disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000).

Requested information:

The purpose of this request is to understand whether there are any guidance, policies or plans regarding the recording of telephone calls between mental health Consultants and patients/ service users. Clear records of such conversations are vital for patient safety, transparency and accountability, as verbal communication can have serious implications for vulnerable individuals. Gathering this information will highlight any gaps in practice and help ensure that mental health services provide safe, verifiable and accountable care. This request aims to collect documented evidence of existing guidance or the absence thereof, to inform potential improvements in safeguarding and governance.

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I am requesting the following information regarding phone calls by mental health Consultants to patients/ service users:

1. Policies/Guidance
Any current policies/standard operating procedures, guidance documents, or protocols regarding the recording (audio, video, or digital log) of phone calls made by mental health Consultants to patients/ service users. **N/A**
2. Internal Documents
Any internal memos, risk assessments or safeguarding documents that relate to recording such calls. **N/A**
3. Legal Advice
Any legal advice or correspondence regarding whether recording such calls is permitted or prohibited under Data protection or other regulations. **N/A**
4. Plans/ Proposals
Any plans, proposals, or discussions (documented in email, meeting minutes or reports) regarding the implementation of recording Consultant-patient telephone calls in the future. **N/A**

Chair: Janet Dawson
Chief Executive: Dr Buki Adeyemo
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5. Confirmation if None Exist
If there are no such documents or plans, please confirm this explicitly and provide the rationale given by the Trust for not having a plan or policy in place. **N/A**
6. Historical Data
If any recordings of consultant/patient telephone calls have taken place in the last 12 months, please provide:
 - The total number of calls recorded. **N/A**
 - The context, purpose, or reason for recording each call (e.g. safeguarding, clinical or legal documentation). **N/A**
7. Previous FOIs
If the Trust has responded to any previous FOI requests regarding the recording of consultant/patient telephone calls, please provide copies of those responses. **No**

Clinical consultations are documented in the patient record in line with professional standards and NHS record keeping requirements. Routine recording is not required to meet these standards, and recording clinical consultations is not standard NHS practice.

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