

Our Ref: NG/RM/26161
Date: 30th June 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 June 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:

I am conducting independent research into the governance of information tools used within clinical or operational services across NHS provider Trusts. I am a former Deputy Director of Data Engineering at NHS England and the founder of Bartlett Data Ltd, an independent NHS data consultancy.

"For the purposes of this request, 'locally developed or maintained information tools used within clinical or operational services' means any spreadsheet, database, document, shared drive folder, whiteboard, paper-based tracker, printed patient list, or other digital or non-digital tool that contains patient-identifiable or service-level information and is created or maintained by clinical or operational staff outside the Trust's formally managed IT systems and record-keeping processes (such as the EPR, PAS, or other centrally supported applications). It does not need to contain patient identifiable data to be included, it just needs to be in use within clinical or operational services.

I request the following information. If any individual question would exceed the cost limit under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act, please answer the remaining questions and advise which question(s) could not be answered within the limit and why. If any information requested is not held, please confirm that it is not held.

1. Has the Trust completed an audit or survey of locally developed or maintained information tools used within clinical or operational services in the last three years? If so, please provide the date of the most recent audit and a summary of its scope and principal findings. If no such audit has been completed, please confirm this.

The Trust has not completed a specific audit or survey of locally developed or maintained information tools used within clinical or operational services during the last three years.

2. Does the Trust's Board Assurance Framework or Corporate Risk Register currently include a risk entry relating to the use of clinical or operational information held outside

the Trust's formally managed IT systems? If so, please provide the risk detail in full. If no such risk entry exists, please confirm this.

The Trust does not currently hold a specific risk entry on its Board Assurance Framework or Corporate Risk Register relating to the use of clinical or operational information held outside formally managed IT systems.

3. How many incidents (e.g. Serious Incidents, Patient Safety Incidents, data breaches, or formal complaints) in the last three years had a root cause or contributing factor related to the accuracy, availability, security, or governance of information held outside the Trust's formally managed IT systems? If the Trust does not categorise or record incidents in a way that would allow this question to be answered without a manual review of individual records, just confirm this rather than attempting the search.

The Trust does not categorise or record incidents in a manner that would enable this information to be identified and reported through a routine search.

4. Which role(s) within the Trust has designated responsibility for the oversight and governance of information tools used within clinical or operational services that sit outside the Trust's formally managed IT systems? Please provide the job title and directorate. If no role has designated responsibility, please confirm this. If disclosing the job title would identify a specific individual, please provide the directorate and pay band instead.

The Trust has not designated a specific role with sole responsibility for the oversight and governance of information tools used outside formally managed IT systems. Responsibility is shared across operational management, information governance, and digital services functions.

5. Has the Trust issued a current policy or guidance to staff regarding the creation, use, and governance of locally developed information tools used within clinical or operational services as defined above? If so, please provide a copy or a link to the published version. If no such policy exists, please confirm this.

The Trust has not issued a specific policy relating solely to the creation, use, and governance of locally developed information tools. However, staff are required to comply with relevant Trust policies.

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