



Resolution

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FOI_4768

The following information was requested on 14 September 2020:

We would like to carry out a retrospective service evaluation of women who have made gynaecology litigation claims registered in the U.K between 2006 and 2018 by collecting data from NHS Resolution of all the claims made and categorised under 'gynaecology'. Those cases related to early pregnancy (ectopic pregnancy, miscarriage and abortion) will be filtered and examined for the number of claims made, the details of why it was made and the outcome. A comparison will be made of the results prior to- and after 2012 to examine the effect, if any, of the NICE guidelines.

With the increasing emphasis on ultrasound based diagnosis and conservative management in the 2012 NICE guidelines, the aim is to establish the rate, cause and outcome of clinical negligence claims in early pregnancy and the effect of any change associated with the publication of the guideline. We would also hope that by looking at trends in our subspecialty, we can disseminate our findings with the aim of raising awareness and improving care.

Our Response

We only hold claims data for England (our schemes only cover England), not the UK.

Although NHS Resolution may hold some information relating to claims such as what you have requested (England only claims), due to the way claims are recorded on our claims database, we will not be able to identify such specific cases. It might be helpful to explain that when claims are notified to NHS Resolution they are categorised against pre-defined cause, injury and speciality [codes](#). We do not have categories of injury for ectopic pregnancy, miscarriage or abortion, nor do we categorise "early pregnancy". Therefore, while there may be information held in our records, we are not readily able to identify the relevant files by searching the database. To do so would involve a manual review of all cases to identify which ones relate to claims involving for ectopic pregnancy, miscarriage, abortion or "early pregnancy". NHS Resolution receives thousands of claims each year.

We have the following specialities: Gynaecology
Obstetrics

By “outcome” we assume that this is either (a) damages awarded/agreed (as in settled cases) or (b) damages not awarded/agreed (closed cases where no damages is awarded).

We could provide you with high level data relating to the specialty Gynaecology and then capture patients that are older than 18 that are female (however that could potentially exclude some young mums). The report could cover number of claims received for the above speciality in the relevant financial years; a breakdown by primary injury; a breakdown by primary cause; numbers settled with associated costs; numbers with no damages paid and numbers currently open. Please let us know if you would be interested in this data.

Therefore, we estimate that the cost of complying with the request in its entirety would exceed the ‘appropriate limit’. Section 12(1) of the FOIA is a provision which allows a public authority to refuse to comply with a request for information where the cost of compliance is estimated to exceed a set limit (known as the ‘appropriate limit’). The ‘appropriate limit’ for NHS Resolution is £450. This equates to 18 hours of work at the rate of £25 per hour set out in the ‘Fees Regulations’.

We estimate that it would take on average 10 minutes to locate, retrieve and extract the requested information from an individual file. It may therefore be the case that we would be able to examine only 108 files within 18 hours.

In addition, given the complexity of clinical negligence claims and their litigation, it is possible for a single electronic or paper-based file to contain hundreds of documents in a variety of formats.

Please also note even if we were able to carry out a review of 108 random files we may not be able to provide you with the level of detail you require owing to Data Protection grounds.

We would need to suppress low numbers or any information that could possibly lead to the identification of claimants, patients or individuals where disclosure would breach the General Data Protection Regulation.

Further to our obligations to provide advice and assistance, you may find it helpful to review the work of the [Getting It Right First Time team](#) with whom NHS Resolution has been working with to undertake in-depth analysis of our claims data. They have produced a number of [reports](#) from analysing our claims data which has been shared following approval of the confidentiality advisory group to the use of confidential patient information for this purpose.

If you would like to know how data is categorised in our Claims database please see the following link: [Glossary](#)

This concludes our response to your request.

If you are not satisfied with the service that you have received in response to your information request, it is open to you to make a complaint and request a formal review of our decisions. If you choose to do this, you should write to [Tinku Mitra](#), Head of Corporate and Information Governance for NHS Resolution, within 28 days of your receipt of this reply. Reviews of decisions made in relation to information requests are carried out by a person who was not involved in the original decision-making about the request.

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a review of the decision. Generally, the Information Commissioner will not make a decision unless you have exhausted the local complaints procedure. The address of the Information Commissioner's Office is:

Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
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