

25 September 2023

Information Rights & Compliance Team  
99 Waverley Road  
St Albans  
Hertfordshire  
AL3 5TL

Tel: 01727 804227  
Email: [Hpft.foi@nhs.net](mailto:Hpft.foi@nhs.net)

Our Ref: FOI/04844

Thank you for your request concerning backup and data protection.

Your request has been considered and processed in accordance with the requirements of the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000.

### QUESTIONS

1. How much data do you store operationally?
2. What is your organisation's current data recovery process?
3. How often does your organisation perform backups of critical data, and is this an automatic or manual backup?
4. Which data backup solutions does your organisation currently employ?
5. What is the average recovery time for your organisation in event of failure or data loss?
6. Does your organisation have a formalised disaster recovery plan?
7. How often does your organisation test the effectiveness of its disaster recovery plan?
8. What types of disasters or incidents does your disaster recovery plan cover?
9. Has your organisation experienced any significant data loss incidents in the past two years? If so, how were they addressed?
10. How does your organisation handle the storage and management of backup tapes or other physical backup media?
11. Does your organisation utilise virtualisation technology for any critical systems or applications?
12. Are there any specific challenges or pain points that your organisations faces regarding VMware or virtualisation technology?
13. How frequently does your organisation update or upgrade its Virtualisation software?
14. What backup/recovery solutions does your organisation use for virtual machines?
15. Has your organisation have any plans to migrate away from legacy backup or disaster recovery systems? If yes, what is the timeline for migration?
16. How does your organisation ensure the security and confidentiality of backup data during transmission and storage?
17. Are there any legal or compliance requirements that impact your organisation's data recovery/backup/disaster recovery processes?
18. When are your contracts for Data Recovery, Backup, Disaster Recovery and VMware related initiatives up for renewal, please express in bullet points and indicate if supplied by multiple vendors or single vendor

Please note that your response will remain private for 12 months following publishing.

## **ANWSERS**

All our IT services are outsourced to Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Luton ICT (HBLICT) (hosted by East and North Hertfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group) in an internal NHS shared service.

However, upon consideration of questions 1 to 18 relating to our backups and IT capabilities, we feel if answered could be used to compromise the security of the organisation. It would make the organisation vulnerable to a crime such as hacking and this could lead to a theft of information or a denial of service to IT systems therefore we have applied S31(1)(a) – Law Enforcement (1) Information is exempt if its disclosure under this Act would or would be likely to prejudice (a) the prevention or detection of crime.

S31 is subject to a test of prejudice. Please see below for our considered reasons for and against disclosure:

### **Reason in favour of disclosure**

We acknowledge the public interest in openness and transparency and recognise that releasing this information would provide the public with assurance that we are protecting their information and our technologies.

### **Reason against disclosure**

Disclosure of the our IT capability would make the Trust vulnerable to cybercrime as it outlines the Trust's security position which could be used as a starting point to attack network infrastructure and/or information systems.

We have reached the view that on balance, the public interest is better serviced by withholding this information under the section 31(1) exemption.

In addition, under Section 16 – Duty to provide advice and assistance, we would like to clarify that requests for information through WhatDoTheyKnow do not remain private for 12 months, they are immediately publicly available. In addition we publish all our FOIs requests on our disclosure log.

Should you require further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Please find enclosed an information sheet regarding copyright protection and the Trust's complaints procedure in the event that you are not satisfied with the response.

Yours sincerely

*Sue Smith*

**Sue Smith**  
**Information Rights Officer**

Enc: Copyright Protection and Complaints Procedure Information Leaflet.

If you would like to complete a short survey in relation to your Freedom of Information request please scan the QR code below or click [here](#).





Hertfordshire  
Partnership University  
NHS Foundation Trust



Our  values  
Welcoming Kind Positive Respectful Professional