

29th June 2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for your recent Freedom of Information request regarding pregnancy remains.

The Trust can provide the following information:

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST – PREGNANCY REMAINS

Thank you for your FOI request received on the 15th of May 2015 where you requested:

“Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I would like to request the following information, regarding the disposal of pregnancy remains (all pregnancy losses prior to 24 weeks:

- 1. How many times pregnancy remains were incinerated with clinical waste.**
- 2. How many “sensitive incinerations” of pregnancy remains (where the remains are packaged, stored and incinerated separately from other clinical waste) were carried out by the Trust.**
- 3. When a “sensitive incineration” is carried out, does the Trust have a policy on how the pregnancy remains are packaged before incineration (i.e. what receptacle are they placed in)? If so, could you provide me with details of that policy**
- 4. For the total number of cases of incineration of pregnancy remains (whether non-sensitive, or sensitive), could you please provide a breakdown of how many parents.**
 - 4.1 Specified they wanted the incineration to occur**
 - 4.2 Expressed no desire to be involved in the decision**
 - 4.3 Did not express an opinion on the incineration within the 12 week timescale**
 - 4.4 Other**
- 5. The number of official complaints the Trust has received related to any aspect of pregnancy remains disposal – whether incineration, sensitive incineration, cremation (shared or individual), burial (shared or individual), mother deciding to take remains home – at any stage pre, during or post disposal, in the years specified”.**

In your e-mail you also confirmed that the time span for the required information was the years 2012-3, 2013-4 and 2014-5.

All human waste is kept separate in griff bins, (big yellow bins), and sent from the mortuary for incineration. In relation to sensitive incineration this applies to patient’s undergoing a Surgical Termination of Pregnancy only, the pregnancy remains for these patients are sent to the mortuary in labelled containers that are pre-sealed. For patients who have had a miscarriage, the pregnancy

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remains are sent for cremation or burial. The Trust does not carry out sensitive incinerations, apart from patients undergoing a STOP as mentioned above.

The discussion for sensitive disposal of pregnancy is taken at time of consent of a STOP and no patients have requested any of the above mentioned in question 4. The trust has never received a complaint from any patients regarding disposal of Pregnancy remains. To summarise all foetus (under 24 weeks) are collected in and sent off for cremation and not incineration. Only patients who have undergone a Surgical Termination of Pregnancy, pregnancy remains are sent for incineration.

If you have any queries about this response please contact the information governance manager at foi@homerton.nhs.uk , in the first instance. If, following that, you still have any concerns, you may contact the Information Commissioner either by letter, FOI/EIR Complaints resolution, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SM9 5AF, or by email www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk to take them further.

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Yours sincerely

Mike Dunne
Information Governance Manager/Deputy Calidcott Guardian