

April 2011

*I am writing to obtain information about the access to confidential health records by non-medical personnel within the trust.*

*To prevent confusion I define non-medical personnel as any member of staff not directly involved in the treatment of patients – namely administrative staff. Therefore all types of doctors, nurses, midwives, pharmacists, medical students and so forth are exempt from this FOI request.*

*To outline my query as clearly as possible, I am requesting:*

- 1. The total number of non-medical personnel working within the trust who have immediate access to confidential medical records.*

*My definition of access is being able to see at least a patient's full name, date of birth and most recent medical history. I define immediate access as the ability to access medical records without requiring the consent of the patient or a signature from a health professional (i.e. a doctor, nurse or similar).*

As at 30 April 2011, the Trust employed a total of 3,788.95 full-time equivalent staff (FTE). Approximately 749 FTE administrative staff would have immediate access to health records. Access would generally only be as part of the patient's care plan. This comprises consultant's secretaries, ward clerks, and health records library staff. Other administrative staff may have access to records for the purpose of undertaking clinical audits, dealing with complaints, claims and incidents. All staff are subject to access controls and are bound by a code of confidentiality concerning safeguarding of patient information from inappropriate disclosure.