

18-0409 FOI Request: Overseas Visitors

Thank you for your FOI request sent on 5th April 2018.

Under Section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I can confirm that The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust holds information that falls within the definition in your request which is set out below:

1. Please tell me whether the trust carries out routine identity checks on patients attending outpatient appointments to ascertain whether they are ordinarily resident in the UK.

Yes we do. This is carried out at reception where staff are scripted to ask patients to provide evidence of residence in the UK. For instance, a patient may be British and hold a British passport, but because they do not live in the UK for the majority of their time, they may need to pay but are not aware of this. A check is also undertaken when the outpatient appointment is booked. Staff check for, valid UK addresses, NHS numbers, GP registration and any other indicators of origin. Further to this, an SQL report is received every morning which indicates which patients that appear on the system may not be entitled to free treatment. Staff will arrange to meet with patients to clarify and arrange payment.

2. If yes, please answer the following questions:

A) Which patients undergo such checks? (– eg all those attending first appointment for a new care pathway)

Any patients that are identified by SQL, or identified by checking clinic diary and inpatient list.

B) Please state what forms of documentation they have to provide? (eg passports, proof of address)

If applicable, we ask patients to provide: Passport

- Visa
- Utility Bills
- Payslips
- EHIC Cards
- ID Cards

C) What happens if they cannot provide proof of being ordinarily resident?

After interviewing a patient, if they have no documentation to prove their residency or there is nothing to show on the NHS portal, the patient would be charged for treatment.

3. Please also state how many Overseas Visitor Managers (OVMs) or Overseas Visitor Officers (OVOs) are employed by the trust (Please state as Full Time Equivalent)

1x Manager – full time

2x Officers – full time

4. Please state the highest bill which is still outstanding owed by an overseas visitor for a) 2017/18 to date and b)2016/17.

The highest unpaid overseas visitor invoice/s currently are:

17/18 - £25,413

16/17 - £14,206

5. In relation to question 4, please broadly state the nature of the treatment (eg ophthalmology, kidney dialysis, obstetrics) and the nationality of the patient, if known.

17/18 – Stroke - Nationality British

16/17 – Oncology - Nationality Polish