

5 July 2022

Tuberculosis

1. What are the target times for contact tracing and notifying possible contact when someone has come into contact with an individual with Active Tuberculosis?

When a patient has tested positive for Tuberculosis, a contact tracing exercise is performed, then those contacts are invited to come into the Trust for screening as soon as possible.

2. A patient was diagnosed with Tuberculosis in the January of 2020, having been misdiagnosed in March 2019 when the patient had attended a&e. On 06/06/2022 this year patients who may have come into contact with the said patient in March 2019 have been recalled for precautionary screening.

2.a. Why did it take the trust over two years to contact those deemed possibly close contacts?

2.b. Why has the trust taken the decision to screen possible close contacts of the infected patient?

2. c. How many people have been asked to take part in this precautionary screening?

Personal information is not discoverable under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. We are therefore not able to provide the information requested as this is deemed to be personal information relating specifically to a patient and is therefore exempt under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 as disclosure would contravene Data Protection Principle (a).

3. How many patients have been newly diagnosed with Tuberculosis within the Belfast trust since March 2019?

Since 2019 there have been less than 5 patients testing positive for Tuberculosis. We are unable to provide an exact figure as doing so has the potential to make patients personally identifiable. We again deem this to be personal information and therefore exempt from release under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Disclosure would again constitute a breach of the principles of the General Data Protection Regulations 2018.

4. When were staff who came into contact with the infected patient (March 2019 & January 2020) notified and tested for Tuberculosis?

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As stated above, we are not able to provide the information requested as this again is deemed to be personal information relating specifically to a patient and is therefore exempt under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 as disclosure would contravene Data Protection Principle (a).