

Ref FOI17 004  
Date 7 February 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

### **Request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000**

---

Please find below/attached the Isle of Wight NHS Trust's response to your request.

I am writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to request the below information about "dummy appointments".

For the purposes of clarification I understand the term "dummy appointments" to mean dummy clinic slots made available to patients booking via the NHS e-referral services. The appointments do not exist and the patient should not attend. I believe that these slots allow hospitals to view patient's clinical details and then transfer patients to an internal administration system.

If there is any confusion about the term "dummy appointment" please do not hesitate to get in touch. You can find the term referred to in this NHS Digital document  
[http://content.digital.nhs.uk/media/17199/Best-Practice-Guidelines-for-Commissioners/pdf/NHS\\_e-Referral\\_Service\\_Commissioner\\_Best\\_Practice\\_Guidance.pdf](http://content.digital.nhs.uk/media/17199/Best-Practice-Guidelines-for-Commissioners/pdf/NHS_e-Referral_Service_Commissioner_Best_Practice_Guidance.pdf)

Please find my questions below:

1. Does your NHS trust use a dummy appointment system?

**Response: No, the Isle of Wight NHS Trust does not use a "dummy appointment system"**

2. Please elaborate on the answer to question 1 to explain why, or why not.

**Response: When the Choose and Book system was first implemented it was considered that operating a dummy appointment system would cause duplication at the Secondary Care end, therefore was never implemented.**

3. If the answer to question 1 is no, has the Trust ever used a dummy appointment system in the past?

Response: No the Isle of Wight NHS Trust has never used this in the past.

4. If the answer to question 1 is yes, how many dummy appointments have been made available by your Trust in the past three calendar years (2014, 2015, 2016)? Please provide the figure for each year separately. What percentage of total appointments does this represent?

Response: This is not applicable.

5. If the answer to question 1 is yes, how are dummy appointments cancelled?

Response: This is not applicable.

6. If the answer to question 1 is yes, are patients who have been allocated a dummy appointment made aware that the slot should not be attended?

Response: This is not applicable.

7. If the answer to question 1 is yes, how much has it cost your NHS Trust to administer cancellations of dummy appointments over the past 3 calendar years (2014/2015/2016)? Please provide separate figures for each year.

Response: This is not applicable.

8. How many Appointment Slot Issues (ASI's) resulting from the NHS e-referral service has the Trust had in the past calendar year?

Response: The Isle of Wight NHS Trust does not record how many patients appear on the Appointment Slot issues worklist over time. Any patients that appear on this worklist are actioned, usually within a few days, and booked either in e-referrals or directly into Patient Centre (our Patient Administration System).

9. Has the Trust had to pay any financial penalties for missing a contractual target ensuring sufficient NHS e-referral appointments are available? Please provide figures from the past 3 calendar years (2014/2015/2016).

Response: The Isle of Wight NHS Trust has not had to pay any financial penalties.

10. Are "dummy appointments" included in your waiting list statistics submitted to NHS England?

Response: This is not applicable.

11. Are patients who have generated ASI's included in your waiting times statistics submitted to NHS England?

Response: No, these statistics are not submitted to NHS England as patients are not left on the Appointment Slot issues worklist but added to Patient Centre, so they would be included in any waiting times statistics produced from Patient Centre.

The Isle of Wight NHS Trust came into existence on 1 April 2012 and does not hold information prior to this date. If you require information prior to this date, please contact the Department of Health.

Please note that this response does not constitute consent for direct marketing.

The Isle of Wight NHS Trust serves a resident population of 140,000 with a substantial influx of tourists during the summer months. The Trust provides acute, ambulance, community, maternity, mental health services on the Isle of Wight. As the only fully integrated service provider in England with this unique range of services comparisons with other service providers are not always straightforward.

A log of this request will be held on a database by the Trust. All hard copy correspondence relating to this request will be held for one year from the date of this letter, before being confidentially destroyed. A copy of this response will be published on the Trust website.

If you are unhappy about the response you have received, you should write and request the Trust to undertake an internal review of your application. A senior member of staff, not previously involved with your request for information, will undertake this review. If you remain dissatisfied with the response received you may complain to the Information Commissioner at the following address:

Information Commissioner  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

Please do not hesitate to contact this office if you have any further questions.

Yours faithfully

**Freedom of Information Team**

