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Freedom of Information Act Disclosure log - Reply Extract

You asked

How many letters have been sent out to patients from this Trust informing them that they may not be eligible for NHS care? Please provide figures for April 2016 up to April 2017, or the most recently available 12-month period. To clarify, I'm looking for information on people who may have been ineligible for NHS care due to their immigration status.

Our reply

The Trust has an Overseas Visitors Officer that manages payments from people not entitled to receive NHS care. We are pursuing measures designed to improve the identification of overseas visitors who are liable to pay for their treatment. Identity checks are carried out by the Overseas Visitors Officer supported by clinical and administrative staff. Individual briefings for administrative staff are given by the Overseas Visitors Officer, an online training package is being developed for all staff, overseas visitor questions are included in the Trust's electronic check-in system for appointments and an Administrative Guidance Note has recently been issued reinforcing staff responsibility for identifying overseas visitors and outline the procedure to be adopted.

As part of the identity checks, the Trust currently notifies patients face to face that they may not be eligible for NHS care. Where this is found to be the case, the Trust issues invoices to patients not eligible for NHS care or the bodies responsible for the costs of their treatment.

To date, the Trust has not issued any letters along the lines outlined in the request, however the Trust is planning to issue letters to elective overseas patients from the 1st April 2017, in order to secure payment for treatment in advance in appropriate cases.