

Our Ref: TS/AKB/FOI/10/573

Stafford Education & Enterprise Park  
Weston Road  
Stafford  
ST18 0BF

30<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Telephone: 0300 123 1461

Sent by email

Dear

**FOI-10-573**

**Your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000**

Thank you for your request for information received on the 20<sup>th</sup> October 2023. We can confirm that the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board can provide the following information.

An anonymised copy of this response will be made publicly available on the ICB website.

Please see our responses in blue below:

**I have some questions around patient choice:**

- 1. Can the ICB explain how their referral management centre is offering patient's the choice of 5 providers for consultant led, elective care for Ophthalmology? Do they have an algorithm or protocol they can share with me?**

Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent (SSOT) referral management centre is called "Choice and Referral". When patients have been referred to Choice and Referral the Team then make contact with patients directly. The Team talk the patient through their choice options. The Team then use this information when they review providers that are on E-Referral Service (ERS) and then offer the patient choice of five providers. The majority of our ophthalmology patient's choose providers that are geographically closest to them based on their postcodes.

- 2. Can the ICB advise for ophthalmology within the region, which providers are included in that choice conversation for the provision of:**

- **cataracts**
- **glaucoma**
- **wet AMD**
- **oculoplastics**

It is not feasible to state all providers that will be included within the patient conversation as the choice of providers will potentially be different for each patient as choice relates to the patient's own criteria. The Choice and Referral Team use providers that are listed on ERS.

- 3. Can the ICB confirm how they gather up to date information about provider capacity for each of the specialities above, to be discussed in the choice conversation?**

The Choice and Referral Team use the information provided on ERS, My Planned Care website and direct information from local providers.

- 4. If the referral management centre function is delivered by a commissioned provider, how does the ICB ensure they are fulfilling patient choice?**

Not Applicable. The Choice and Referral Centre is not delivered by a commissioned provider.

Should you require any further information or clarification regarding this response please do not hesitate to contact us. If you are dissatisfied with the response, you are entitled to request an internal review which should be formally requested in writing and must be within two calendar months from the date this response was issued.

**To request an internal review**

You can request an internal review by contacting the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board FOI team by emailing the team at [StaffsStokeFOI@staffsstoke.icb.nhs.uk](mailto:StaffsStokeFOI@staffsstoke.icb.nhs.uk) or by post to the address at the top of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of your internal review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board's FOI complaints procedure.

The ICO can be contacted at:  
Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF  
[www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)

Yours sincerely

**Tracey Shewan**  
**Director of Corporate Governance**