

Executive Corridor
Darlington Memorial Hospital
Hollyhurst Road
Darlington
DL3 6HX
Switchboard Tel: 01325 38 0100
Foundation Trust Office: 01325 74 3625
Corporate Records Office: 01325 74 3700

Request for Information Reference: 11.22.46

FOI Direct line: 01325 743700
Email: cdda-tr.cddftfoi@nhs.net

Email only

9th December 2022

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request for Information

Thank you for submitting a request for information which we received on 18th November 2022 in relation to County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust (the Trust). Your request has been processed under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and I am now able to provide you with a response.

Your request was in relation to tongue tie assessment and diagnosis and I am providing the following information in response to your specific questions:

1. Do Midwives use The Bristol Tongue-tie Assessment Tool? If No please state the assessment used.

Yes, however Midwives generally do not perform a full assessment using the BTAT score, Midwives will assess the baby's feeding ability and if a problem is suspected will refer to the Specialist infant feeding midwives for full assessment using the BTAT tool.

2. Please confirm which staff perform the assessment. For example, a midwife or a doctor?

Specialist Infant feeding midwives perform the assessment using the Bristol Tongue tie assessment tool.

3. Is it a specialist midwife or a junior doctor at the Newborn and Infant Physical Examination (NIPE) assessment?

Junior paediatricians and NIPE trained midwives would perform the new-born assessment, a senior member of staff may be requested to review the examination if further input is required.

4. Do you provide a tongue-tie service?

- a. If Yes please state what this consists of eg please state if this is an outpatient clinic and how many staff and their job designation/band. - Yes**

Yes, the Trust does provide a tongue tie service, it is an outpatient service and runs one day per week. It is facilitated by a Band 7 Infant feeding midwife and supported by a band 3 maternity care assistant. The Trust accept referrals from County Durham and Darlington, North and South Tees ICS for all babies with a feeding problem which is suspected to be caused by a restricted frenulum up to the age of 16 weeks.

- b. If No - do staff advise parents to speak to their GP or Health visitor?**

Not applicable

5. What improvements have been made offering parents support on tongue tie in the past 18 months as a result of patient feedback?

Due to the large area the Trust covers we have adapted the clinic to be run from the Trust's acute sites, alternating weekly from the North (University hospital of North Durham) and (Darlington memorial hospital) south of the county. Alongside this the Trust has provided a specialist support clinic for mothers with feeding problems which may or may not be associated with restricted frenulum.

- a. Please provide an example and include the source of the original feedback eg National Maternity Survey, Complaint, PALS, FFT.**

An example from a survey led by our maternity voices partnership highlighted that some women highlighted improvements could be made when needing to use telephone communications.

In response, Maternity Care assistants will have access to a video call platform to be able to provide antenatal discussions and support teaching of skills like hand expressing which are difficult to do over the phone.

In line with the Information Commissioner's directive on the disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 your request will form part of our disclosure log on the Trust's website. However please be assured that we anonymise all responses prior to adding them to the disclosure log.

I hope that this response has provided you with the information you had requested. If you have any queries or wish to discuss the information supplied, please do not hesitate to contact me by telephone or in writing. If however, you are dissatisfied with the way in which your request has been handled and would like an internal review,

you will need to contact me in writing at the above address or via cdda-tr.cddftfoi@nhs.

If you remain dissatisfied with our response following an internal review you have the right to appeal to The Information Commissioner at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. More information is available on their website; www.ico.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely

Corporate Records and Freedom of Information Facilitator