

Date: 27/05/2015

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 - Ref: FOI/012229**

With reference to your FOI request that was received in connection with 'Maternity referrals' see response below.

**You are one of several trusts that have highlighted geographical restrictions for their services. If possible, I would like some more detail on your geographical boundary restrictions for maternity referrals. Please could I see the policy in which this is written, and any supporting documents that explain how or why this system came to be.**

**1. How the catchment area is defined. 2. How to determine who is eligible by CCGs. 3. If someone is within the catchment area, but is not under a CCG who has a contract with the trust, are they still eligible for care?**

Please find a link from The Trust's website:<http://dudleygroup.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Trust-to-temporarily-restrict-maternity-bookings.pdf> which shows the original press release that we made to temporarily restrict maternity referrals by imposing a cap. The cap still remains in place today but we are currently looking at easing some of the boundaries.

Our maternity unit remains to be a popular choice for mums-to-be and we are continuing to see an increased number of women choosing to have their babies at Russells Hall Hospital.

To continue providing safe, effective care for women and their babies accepted for delivery at Russells Hall Hospital, The Trust reluctantly took the decision to temporarily limit future bookings to the maternity unit. This was to allow the Trust to recruit more midwives and medical staff to ensure our maternity services continued to provide safe effective care as demand for the service grew.

The catchment area is geographical, based on the number of miles from Russells Hall and the availability of an alternative.

There is not a cut off at the Dudley border, i.e. we still see Sandwell, South East Staffs patients etc.

The CCG is not the determining factor, it is the distance. Anyone within the catchment area is eligible for care whether we have a contract with the CCG or not (although the latter would be extremely unlikely)