

For the Record – Press Statements

<b>Publication</b>	Express and Star
<b>Date of article</b>	Saturday 22 <sup>nd</sup> September 2012
<b>Reporter</b>	David Lumb
<b>Headline</b>	Hospital bills unpaid by foreign patients
<b>First paragraph/s of article</b>	Foreign patients are costing hospital trusts in the West Midlands hundreds of thousands of pounds by going missing after operations.
<b>Paragraph/s relating to The Dudley Group</b>	<p>Walsall Healthcare NHS trust, which runs the Manor Hospital, is chasing £18,173, The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust £12,091 and Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust £5,217.</p> <p>Figures from The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust, which manages Russells Hall Hospital, revealed the trust has invested thousands of pounds in recent years on hiring debt collection agencies to recover the money.</p>
<b>Press enquiry</b>	<p>The reporter is following up a Freedom of Information response that revealed the Trust is owed £12,000 for operations on non EU patients.</p> <p><b>Questions:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How big an issue is this for the Trust?</li> <li>2. What is the Trust doing proactively to combat this problem?</li> </ol>
<b>Also issued to:</b>	NA
<b>Trust response</b>	
<p>The Trust's turnover is £288 million; £12,000 owed for operations by non EU patients is comparatively small compared to other NHS organisations. However, we take monies owed to the Trust very seriously and in all cases we vigorously pursue outstanding debt.</p> <p>We also have robust procedures in place to ensure overseas patients are managed effectively including the process for obtaining their agreement to pay for treatment. We are advised by external solicitors and other agencies that some debts are not recoverable</p>	