

Trust Headquarters
Russell's Hall Hospital
Dudley
West Midlands
DY1 2HQ

Ref: FOI-000198

Date: 4/8/23

Address / Email:

Dear

Request Under Freedom of Information Act 2000

Thank you for requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, please see response below.

Please see below a request for the following information relating to tongue tie in babies aged **0-12 months**.

- **How many babies were born within your trust between Jan 1st 2022 and December 31st 2022? – Live Births (4146)**
- **How many babies were diagnosed with ankyloglossia (tongue tie) between Jan1st 2022 and December 31 2022 at your trust?**
Some cases of tongue-tie may be diagnosed during a new-born's physical examination after birth. In these cases, the clinical coding of the diagnosis would be recorded as part of the new-born's admission. If a baby is admitted multiple times, then this diagnosis may be recorded at each occasion. However, this is not necessarily the complete picture as tongue-tie may not be apparent at birth, rather it may become evident as the baby develops, such as in difficulty feeding. These suspected tongue-tie babies are assessed by midwives in an outpatient clinic, where a diagnosis may be established and a corrective frenulotomy performed if necessary. The trust does not code diagnoses for outpatient attendances and therefore we are unable to provide these figures. We may provide the number of attendances at these clinics and/or the number of frenulotomies performed but not the number diagnosed.
- **On average how many days after birth was a tongue tie diagnosis made between Jan 1st 2022 and December 31st 2022? and How many babies diagnosed with tongue tie were referred for a frenotomy procedure (tongue tie division) between Jan 1st 2022 and December 31st 2022?**
Frenulotomies performed at the trust for babies less than ten weeks are undertaken by midwives, who are trained tongue tie practitioners, rather than surgeons. Tongue-tie divisions may be performed by surgeons in theatres; however, this is rare in children less than one year old due to the increased anaesthesia risk. There were no coded theatre cases for the release of tongue-tie in less than one-year olds for the Trust in 2022. Also, surgeons may perform a frenulotomy in the outpatient setting during a regular attendance as required. In total, 429 frenulotomies were coded as performed (OPCS code F26.3) in the Trust for babies less than one year old during 2022. Unfortunately, the trust cannot provide an average wait from diagnosis. As explained in answer to the previous question, the vast majority of babies will have been assessed at an outpatient attendance, and

unfortunately the trust does not electronically code whether a diagnosis was made. If a procedure is required and consented to during the assessment, then the frenulotomy would be performed there and then in an outpatient setting.

- **Is the frenotomy procedure (tongue tie division) available to babies who are fully formula fed?**
We offer frenulotomy to babies who are having feeding difficulties, this can be breast, mixed or bottle feeding.
- **How many frenotomy procedures (tongue tie division) were carried out on babies at your trust between Jan 1st 2022 and December 31st 2022?**
See the above answer In total, 424 frenulotomies were coded as performed (OPCS code F26.3) in the Trust for babies less than one year old during 2022.
- **What was the average waiting time in days between diagnosis/ referral and a frenotomy procedure (tongue tie division) between Jan 1st 2022 and December 31st 2022?**
28 Days
- **How many women had to wait 3 weeks or longer after a referral for a frenotomy procedure (tongue tie division) or their baby between Jan 1st 2022 and December 31st 2022?**
209
- **How many women waited more than 6 weeks, 8 weeks, 12 weeks and 16 weeks or longer for a frenotomy procedure (tongue tie division) for their baby between Jan 1st 2022 and December 31st 2022?**
6 weeks-110
8 weeks-66
12 weeks- 4
16 weeks- 2
- **What is the longest amount of time a women had to wait after a referral for a frenotomy procedure (tongue tie division) for their baby between Jan 1st 2022 and December 31st 2022?**
157 days (22.4 weeks)
- If there is no tongue tie division service in your trust how many referrals were made to an alternative NHS Service for tongue toe division? N/A
- How many women declined the offer of a frenotomy procedure (tongue tie division) within the NHS between Jan 1st 2022 and December 31st 2022? Unable to answer
- Of the women who declined the offer of a frenotomy procedure (tongue tie division) within the NHS between Jan 1st 2022 and December 31st 2022 are you aware how many sought treatment privately instead? Unable to answer.

If you are dissatisfied with our response, you have the right to appeal in line with guidance from the Information Commissioner. In the first instance you may contact the Information Governance Manager of the Trust.

Information Governance Manager
Trust Headquarters
Russell's Hall Hospital
Dudley
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DY1 2HQ
Email: dgft.dpo@nhs.net

Should you disagree with the contents of our response to your appeal, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioners Office at.

Information Commissioners Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane

FOI/REF FOI-

Wilmslow

Cheshire

SK9 5AF

Tel: 0303 123 1113

www.ico.org.uk

If you require further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Team
The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust