

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

**Ref:** FOI-022024-000635

**Date:** 15<sup>th</sup> February 2024

**Address / Email:**

Dear

**Request Under Freedom of Information Act 2000**

Thank you for requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

**Request**

We are conducting research to determine the causes of sudden cardiac death (SCD) in patients with cardiac devices. Despite an estimated 50,000 to 70,000 annual SCD cases in the UK, post-mortem device checks are not routinely performed, leading to missed insights into the exact causes of these deaths. Our project aims to explore variations in current practices.

Therefore, we kindly are requesting information on your institution's post-mortem procedures related to patients with cardiac devices. We have attached a short questionnaire in line with the above-mentioned objectives.

We are extremely grateful for your support in distributing this to the relevant individuals in your institution.

**Response**

Please find attached your completed questionnaire as requested.

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  
West Midlands  
DY1 2HQ  
Email: [dgft.dpo@nhs.net](mailto: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](http://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**

## Investigation into post mortem cardiac device interrogation

### Request for Information

To garner a comprehensive understanding of the practices and data surrounding patients with cardiac devices, we kindly request the following information:

Q1	How many patients pass through your morgue each year?	2300
Q2	Approximately what proportion of these have a cardiac implantable device in situ? (PPM, ICD, ILR)	4%
Q3	Does the hospital morgue also take deaths from the community, or is it for inpatients only?	YES
Q4	Is there a cardiac physiology department on site at your hospital?	YES
Q5	If a patient has a cardiac device in situ, is it routine practice for a device check to be undertaken after death?	YES
Q6a	If yes, is the information regarding rhythm/therapies at the time of death routinely added to the patient's notes/hospital record?	YES
Q6b	If yes, is the information regarding rhythm/therapies at the time of death routinely passed on to the clinical team?	NO
Q7	If no and this is not routine practice, are there ever exceptions to this, i.e., occasions where a post-death device check is requested by the clinical team?	YES
Q8	If yes, please elaborate (for example, how often or under what circumstances this occurs).	ICD AND ILR are routinely checked and if the information is relevant it will be passed to the clinical team

We welcome any additional information or comments that might help in our investigation.

ICD AND ILR are routinely checked and if the information is relevant it will be passed to the clinical team

PPM are not routinely checked post death

We appreciate your assistance and the time taken to provide this information. Your insights are invaluable.