

From: minh alexander <REDACTED>

Subject: Public access to complaints and concerns data about UHB that is held by Healthwatch Birmingham

Date: 16 April 2023 at 07:17:34 BST

To: REDACTED, REDACTED

Thank you both

And thank you for persevering with the email

There may be some incompatibility between AOL and the HW system

I've had no problems reported at my end from other correspondents

What sort of bounce backs did you get?

Regarding the online feedback, I have looked at this, but it's of limited use knowing that it's only part of the data, and that people with possibly the most serious issues will write in specifically to you as opposed to just leaving website feedback.

I think I saw on my travels that Healthwatch Torbay used to produce an annual evidence document, which gave a very broad summary of the number of concerns received for the year and the number of "serious complaints" received. I don't know how they defined "serious complaints".

Do the commissioners of Healthwatch services, or the DHSC as the ultimate funder, proscribe the publication of Healthwatch complaints data and/or require that it is reserved for them only in confidential reporting?

BW

Minh

From: Richard Burden <REDACTED >

Subject: Re: Public access to complaints and concerns data about UHB that is held by Healthwatch Birmingham

Date: 15 April 2023 at 20:08:36 BST

To: minh alexander <REDACTED>

Cc: REDACTED

Hello again Minh.

In fact, Andy Cave, our CEO at Healthwatch Birmingham and Healthwatch Solihull, sent you a further e-mail the other day but he received a bounce-back from your account. I tried to resend his e-mail from my Healthwatch account yesterday but, strangely, I also got a bounce-back.

Trying for a third time from this account below and hoping for the best.

Best wishes,

Richard

From: Andy Cave <REDACTED>

Date: 13 April 2023 at 16:14:35 BST

To: minh alexander <REDACTED>

Cc: REDACTED

Subject: RE: Public access to complaints and concerns data about UHB that is held by Healthwatch Birmingham

Dear Minh,

Thanks for your response. I want to assure you that our aim is to make as much of our insight publicly available as possible. One way that we do this is through our online feedback centre which can be found on our website.

I will pull out the points in your email to Richard and include these in addition to your FOI questions as part of our response. That way you have a more detailed response in the areas you have raised.

You will receive this as soon as we have the information available within the time frame.

Best Wishes

Andy

Andy Cave

Chief Executive Officer

Please sign up to our [newsletter](#) to find out more about our work

<image001.jpg>

Cobalt Square | 83 Hagley Road | Birmingham | B16 8QG

REDACTED

<image002.jpg>

Sent from my iPhone

On 13 Apr 2023, at 14:09, minh alexander <minhalexander@aol.com> wrote:

Thanks for getting back to me Richard

I am disappointed that Healthwatch Birmingham, like many local Healthwatch organisations, is not publishing data on complaints and concerns as a matter of policy.

I was hoping that the UHB affair might catalyse a change in policy direction.

My FOI request does overlap with the data that I am asking HW Birmingham to publish, and I think all of the data that I have asked for under FOIA is clearly in the public interest as well, but they are not the same datasets.

I don't really see an argument for delaying publication of the complaints and concerns data, when this was an obvious gap in the Bewick rapid review on clinical safety, and you yourself issued a statement expressing concern that the Bewick report publication was delayed.

I think the concerns about the safety of the clinical service provided by UHB requires utmost transparency in all available and relevant data.

I hope HW Birmingham will reconsider and contribute its data to the public discourse.

With best wishes,

Minh

Dr Minh Alexander

From: Richard Burden <REDACTED >

Subject: Re: Public access to complaints and concerns data about UHB that is held by Healthwatch Birmingham

Date: 13 April 2023 at 12:24:13 BST

To: REDACTED

Cc: Andy Cave <REDACTED>

Dear Minh,

Thanks for your e-mail. I understand you have also sent a Freedom Of Information request to Healthwatch covering similar issues, so at this stage I think it is best for us to await the response to that request.

Best wishes,

Richard

Richard Burden
Chair
Healthwatch Birmingham and Healthwatch Solihull

Sent from my iPhone

On 11 Apr 2023, at 11:50, REDACTED wrote:

BY EMAIL

Richard Burden
Chair of Healthwatch Birmingham

11 April 2023

Dear Richard,

Public access to complaints and concerns data about UHB that is held by Healthwatch Birmingham

I asked Healthwatch Birmingham via a Twitter conversation if it collated data on concerns and complaints from the public about local NHS services, with particular respect to UHB, for obvious reasons.

HW Birmingham initially directed me to the online feedback page of its website:

healthwatchbirmingham.co.uk/services

When I asked about correspondence received by HW Birmingham from the public regarding complaints and concerns, and whether this generated any summarised data and reports, HW Birmingham replied that correspondence would not be published because it was confidential.

After I pressed the point about summarised data, HW Birmingham indicated that anonymised data about concerns received is sent to regulators and commissioners in quarterly reports, which are confidential.

"Anonymised data is shared with regulators & commissioners in a confidential quarterly report. We also have avenues for directly raising concerns with services. Pls email info@healthwatchbirmingham.co.uk if you wish to discuss further. Thanks."

I wonder if in view of the clear and current public interest in University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust, and the extraordinary omission of any patient complaints data from Mike Bewick's phase one rapid review on clinical safety at UHB, whether Healthwatch Birmingham should now publish its anonymised data on all concerns and complaints received about UHB.

I can see no objection on grounds of confidentiality and privacy if the data is anonymised and aggregated.

A series of such data going back over years would be valuable in helping to set the current concerns about UHB's culture, clinical performance and safety into context.

Furthermore, Healthwatch Birmingham's dataset can be argued to be a more independent dataset that has not been controlled by the UHB board, and may have added value in this respect.

With best wishes,

Minh

Dr Minh Alexander

Cc Birmingham and Solihull Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee
BBC Newsnight