

**FoI request re: Assessing variation in Axial Spondyloarthritis Services**  
**Ref: 19-DT-1206**

Dear,

Thank you for your request for information relating to Axial Spondyloarthritis Services.

This was received on 14 May 2019 and has been dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Please find our responses below:

**Request 1:**

Does your Trust have a specified pathway from primary care to secondary care for inflammatory back pain in place? [No](#)

*If you answered 'yes', please give details below of the pathway and, if applicable, arrangements in place to raise awareness in primary care:*

If neither of the above response options apply to you, please provide more information on your local arrangements below

**Diagnosis in specialist care settings**

**Request 2:**

What is the average current waiting time to diagnosis for a patient referred with inflammatory back pain?

Option	Please tick here (one option only)
Less than 1 month	
1 – 2 months	
2 – 3 months	
3 – 4 months	✓
4 – 5 months	
5 – 6 months	
6 – 12 months	
More than 12 months	

**Request 3:**

Are patients with suspected axial SpA (AS) routinely referred for a full spinal MRI?

Option	Please tick here (one option only)
Yes	
No	✓

If neither of the above response options apply to you, please provide more information on your local arrangements below

Whittington Health NHS Trust

Interim Chair: David Holt    Chief Executive: Siobhan Harrington

**Information and Support**

**Request 4:**

How do you ensure patients are given information and support following their diagnosis?

Option	Please tick here (tick all that apply)
Written information	✓ ARC (Arthritis Research Council)
Verbal information	✓
Access to a helpline	
Named contact in the team	Rheumatologist
Group educational sessions	
Other (please provide details)	

**Pharmacological management of axial SpA (AS)**

**Request 5:**

What guidance are patients with axial SpA (AS) given when deciding whether to access biologic treatment?

Verbal explanation and ARC (Arthritis Research Council)

**Request 6:**

Bearing in mind the NICE anti TNF guidance for ankylosing spondylitis (TA383) states that, 'Treatment with another anti TNF is recommended for people who cannot tolerate, or whose disease has not responded to, treatment with the first TNF-alpha inhibitor, or whose disease has stopped responding after an initial response', after failure with one biologic, how many other biologics will your commissioners fund a patient with axial SpA (AS) to try, including IL 17As?

Option	Please tick here (one option only)
None	
1	
2	✓
3 or more	

If none of the above response options apply to you, please provide more information on your local arrangements below

**Non-pharmacological management of axial SpA**

**Request 7:**

What proportion of adults with axial SpA (AS) are referred to a specialist physiotherapist for a structured exercise programme within your local area when first diagnosed? 10 %

**Flare management**

**Request 8:**

What percentage of patients with axial SpA (AS) have a written care plan to support them with a flare? 10%

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**Organisation of care**

**Request 9:**

Does the Trust have a dedicated axial SpA (AS) clinic?

Option	Please tick here (one option only)
Yes	
No	✓

If neither of the above response options apply to you, please provide more information on your local arrangements below:

**Mental health and well being**

**Request 10:**

Are axial SpA (AS) patients under the care of a rheumatologist offered access to psychological services?

Option	Please tick here (one option only)
Yes	
No	✓

**Request 11:**

If you ticked 'yes', please specify the services on offer:

I hope you find this information useful. Please quote the above reference in any further communication on this matter.

If you require any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me by email or at the address shown below.

Yours sincerely

FOI Coordinator  
**Freedom of Information Office**  
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[Highgate Wing, Level 5](#)  
[Magdala Avenue](#)  
 London, N19 5NF  
[foi.whitthealth@nhs.net](mailto:foi.whitthealth@nhs.net)  
 Whittington Health

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If you are dissatisfied with this response, Whittington Health operates a complaints procedure, details of which can be found below:

**FOI Complaints:**  
 In the first instance, write to:  
**Director Lead for Information Governance**  
 Chief Operating Officer

If you remain dissatisfied with the Trust's response, you may write to:  
**Information Commissioner's Office**  
 Wycliffe House  
 Water Lane

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Whittington Health NHS Trust

Interim Chair: David Holt    Chief Executive: Siobhan Harrington

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