



16 July 2019

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – DECISION NOTICE

Dear Requester

**FOI Reference Number: 000691**

I refer to your email of 26 June requesting information in respect of automated rule-based processes.

I can confirm on behalf of Great Yarmouth and Waveney, North Norfolk, South Norfolk, Norwich and West Norfolk CCGs and in accordance with S.1 (1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) that we do hold some of the information that you have requested. A response to each element of your request is detailed below:

The following response is informed by information held by the CSU I.T. team on behalf of the CCGs in relation to the I.T. service commissioned under an SLA.

### Response

I can confirm that the answer to Q 1 is No and 1.1. is Yes.

Q2 This service is outsourced to Arden & GEM CSU. Should you wish to request information regarding the CSU please contact NHS England at <https://www.england.nhs.uk/contact-us/foi/>

### Request

I am writing to make an open government request for all the information to which I am entitled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Could I possibly suggest that you direct these questions towards one or some of the following Trust employees: - IM&T, IT technical lead, HR Director, Chief Operating Officer, COO, Director of Innovation, Director of Transformation, CFO, CIO.

(NB - In order to better explain the terminology used on these FOI questions, IA/ RPA refers to a style of automation where computer software mimics a human's interaction with application software in completing rules-based tasks and processes. It is considered to provide a highly scalable virtual workforce that completes the repetitive tasks humans normally undertake, by using robotic software. The general consensus is that this releases human employees from tedious tasks to instead focus on deeper cognitive thinking, investigative analysis and decision making. At a time of reduced workforce capacity, we are

interested in the views of NHS organisations as regards employing a digitalised workforce using IA/ RPA)

Please you please answer the following:

1. Does your organization presently use and/or endorse a RPA/ IA (description of this detailed above) to automate manual, rule-based processes?

If the answer is NO –

1.1 Is RPA/IA something that the organisation would consider (within the next 2 years) as a way of supporting reduced human resource capacity, drive efficiency & to improve repeatable business outcomes?

1.2 If the organisation is not considering RPM – is there a reason why this is not being considered?

- Perceived expense
- Concerns about how existing administrative staff would accept this
- This is the first time we have heard about RPA/ IA
- Other reason (please feel free to comment)

1.3 If the answer is YES – RPA/IA is currently being used in the organisation - could you please detail –

1.3.1 The system type/name/supplier

1.3.2 What it is used for (or has been used for) and by what department, examples below –

- Out Patients clinics
- Data Migration
- Waiting Lists
- Referral to Treatment times, (RTT)
- Other (please comment) -

1.3.3 How did the existing human workforce react to tasks being replaced by automation?

- Good, they welcomed the changes
- Bad, they felt threatened
- Indifferent
- Not sure – no feedback
- Other – please comment

1.3.4 When did your RPA/ IA system come into use and when does the contract expires?

1.3.5 How much does this new technology costs the organisation and how many robots do you use &/or processes run?

1.3.6 Has there been any analysis of the system, (&/or case studies) to demonstrate any benefits so far- either operationally, financially, managerially or in any other capacity?

2. Who is the main person(s)/ decision maker (s)or team – who would probably be responsible (or is responsible) for the decision to use RPA/IA in your organisation - Name/title/ contact details

I hope that this answers your queries with the information we currently hold, but if I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to

Arden & GEM CSU  
FOI Team, Room 18  
Scarsdale  
Newbold Road  
Chesterfield  
S41 7PF

Email [agcsu.foi.norfolkwaveneyccgs@nhs.net](mailto:agcsu.foi.norfolkwaveneyccgs@nhs.net)

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided the CCG.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioners Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF, telephone 0303 123 1113, email [casework@ico.org.uk](mailto:casework@ico.org.uk)

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<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/>

Yours faithfully

Philip Humphreys

**Corporate Senior Manager, Arden & GEM CSU**

**On behalf of  
Great Yarmouth and Waveney,  
North Norfolk, South Norfolk  
Norwich and West Norfolk CCGs**