

## Freedom of Information Act 2000

## The Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust Response to Information request

Date Request Received: 16<sup>th</sup> June 2025

FOI Ref No 29203

## Requested Information:

### Background

#### Veganism

1. Veganism is a philosophy and way of living which seeks to exclude—as far as is possible and practicable—all forms of exploitation of, and cruelty to, animals for food, clothing or any other purpose; and by extension, promotes the development and use of animal-free alternatives for the benefit of animals, humans and the environment. In dietary terms it denotes the practice of dispensing with all products derived wholly or partly from animals.

#### Equality Act and Public Sector Equality Duty

2. The public sector equality duty is a duty on public authorities to consider or think about how their policies or decisions affect people who are protected under the Equality Act.
3. People who are protected under the Equality Act have what's called protected characteristics, which includes belief.
4. Ethical veganism is a philosophical belief and thus a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, as confirmed by the employment tribunal in *Casamitjana v League Against Cruel Sports* (2020).
5. Vegans in hospital are entitled to protection from discrimination under the Equality Act.

### Freedom of Information Request

1. **Have you undertaken an equality impact assessment for vegans in hospital? If yes, can you provide a copy of the assessment?**
2. **Are you following your public sector equality duty toward vegans? Please provide any documents or information to explain whether and how the PSED is being followed towards vegans.**

**3. Do you guarantee a full vegan option that is nutritionally appropriate on all menus and in all cafeterias at all times, for all meals, including breakfast, lunch, dinner and snack options.**

**By 'guaranteed' I mean, is there always a fully vegan option available.**

**For clarity, a salad without a plant-based protein and starch or carbohydrate would obviously not be nutritionally appropriate, nor would having only fruit or toast with jam available for a vegan person. For example, many vegetarian options adapted to be vegan would not be nutritionally appropriate as they would be lacking in protein unless there was a substitution provided.**

**4. Do you guarantee plant milk availability on all campuses for coffee and tea? For clarity, plant milk refers to: Soy, oat, almond, or coconut milk.**

#### **Response:**

- 1. No, there is no EIA for Vegan relating to Food and Patient Meals**
- 2. Royal Cornwall Hospitals Trust (RCHT) follows its public sector duty as defined in the Equality Act for people who have specific dietary requirements as part of their religion or ethnicity and other protected characteristic. RCHT takes all reasonably practicable measures to meet the public sector duty in this area.**
- 3. Yes. RCHT offers an a la carte vegan menu for patients. In addition to this, a selection of vegan snacks is available 24/7. All RCHT's retail outlets offer a daily selection of vegan options.**
- 4. Yes, RCHT provides a selection of plant-based milk options in the wards and in the retail outlets.**

#### **Attachment(s):**

No Attachment(s)

**Date Response sent: 21<sup>st</sup> July 2025**