



10 January 2025

Our Ref: FOI/325

Dear

**Freedom of Information Act 2000
Information in Relation to AHP Locum Agency Spend 2024**

I am writing to confirm that the South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust (the Trust) has now completed its search for information relating to above which you requested on 31 October 2024. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding to your request. Thank you for your understanding and forbearance.

A response to each of the questions raised has been provided by the Primary Care & Older Peoples Services and Finance & Estates Directorate and is attached in Appendix A.

If you are unhappy as to how this request has been handled, you have the right to seek a review within the Trust in the first instance. You should write to the Information Governance Department, Lough House, Ards Community Hospital (informationgovernance@setrust.hscni.net) within two months of the date of this response and your complaint will be considered and a response provided, within 20 working days of receipt.

If, after receiving a response, you remain unhappy, you can refer your complaint to the Information Commissioner at The Information Commissioner's Office –Northern Ireland, 3rd Floor, 14 Cromac Place, Belfast, BT7 2JB. It is important to note that if you refer any matter to the Information Commissioner, you will need to show evidence of having gone through the Trust's internal review procedure to try to resolve the matter with the Trust in the first instance.

If you have any queries about this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

Rebecca Manning
Information Governance Officer

For all AHP bands (eg Band 5, Band 6, Band 7) and specialties (eg Psychologists, Pharmacists, Physiotherapists) for the period April – September 2024:

Q1. Please could you provide the data for total spend, for each locum agency used, divided between on and off framework

A1. Please see Table 1 for the requested total spend for Allied Health Professionals (*AHP), Pharmacists and Psychologists.

*Please note that the following specialties are categorised as one service within the Trusts Allied Health Professionals Directorate – Dietetics, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Podiatry and Speech & Language.

Table 1

April 2024 to September 2024	
Framework Category	Total Spend
On Contract/Framework	£491,100
Off Contract/Framework	Nil

Q2. Please confirm the total number of agency locums working per month, for each agency supplier divided between on and off framework.

A2. Please see Table 2 for the number of on-framework agency locum AHP staff, Psychologists and Pharmacists working from April 2024 to September 2024 and the agency name.

Please be advised the Trust do not use off-framework agencies for AHP Staff, Psychologists and Pharmacists.

Table 2

Date	No. of Locums	On Framework Agency
April 2024	8	Your World
	7	Direct Medics
	6	Randstad
	1	First Choice
May 2024	7	Your World
	5	Direct Medics
	6	Randstad
	1	First Choice
June 2024	8	Your World
	9	Direct Medics
	4	Randstad
	1	First Choice
July 2024	8	Your World
	8	Direct Medics
	3	Randstad
	1	First Choice

August 2024	18	Direct Medics
	9	Your World
	2	Randstad
	1	First Choice
September 2024	10	Direct Medics
	8	Your World
	4	Randstad
	1	First Choice

Q3. Please confirm the total number of hours worked by agency locums per month, for each agency supplier divided between on and off framework.

A3. Please see Table 3 for the total number of hours worked by on-framework agencies for Pharmacists and Psychologists from April 2024 to September 2024. Please note, due to the low numbers, the Trust is unable to provide the number of hours worked broken down by supplier, due to the risk of identifying of individuals.

As per A2 the Trust do not use off-framework agencies for AHP Staff, Psychologists and Pharmacists.

Table 3

Date	No. of Hours Worked
April 2024	210 hrs
May 2024	283.5 hrs
June 2024	373 hrs
July 2024	262.5 hrs
August 2024	274.75 hrs
September 2024	105 hrs

Please be advised that the Trust is unable to provide the number of hours worked for AHP staff as this information is not held on a central information system. To obtain this information would require a manual review of records.

This would exceed the 'Appropriate Limit' as defined by the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The Trust therefore exempts the release of this information under Section 12(1).

12.-(1) Section 1(1) does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 this statement acts as a Refusal Notice in regards to the number of hours worked for AHP staff.

Q4. Please confirm the total number of unfilled vacancies (excluding locum filled posts) per month.

A4. Please see Table 4 for the total number of unfilled AHP and Psychologist vacancies from April 2024 to September 2024.

Table 4

Date	No. of Unfilled Vacancies
April 2024	64
May 2024	73
June 2024	76
July 2024	78
August 2024	44
September 2024	80

In regards to unfilled vacancies for Pharmacists the Trust is unable to provide the requested data broken down by month due to vacancies changing each month and this is not recorded/reported on a month to month basis. However the Trust can confirm that during the timeframe April 2024 to September 2024 there were a total of 32 unfilled vacancies.