



21 January 2025

**Our Ref:** FOI 435

Dear

**Freedom of Information Act 2000  
Information in relation to Radiology Reporting Services**

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 19 December 2024.

A response to questions 2 - 5 has been provided by the Surgery & Elective, Maternity & Paediatric Services Directorate and is attached in Appendix A.

In relation to question 1, I would like to advise you that the Trust has decided not to release the information that is held for the following reasons:

The information requested in question 1, '***Outsourced Tele radiology Provider Name***', is exempt from release under Section 31 and Section 38 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

These are all qualified exemptions and so a Public Interest Test was carried out to decide if the information should be released or not. Having weighed up the factors for and against release, it was decided to withhold this information because the disclosure of such information would:

- a) (Section 31) Leave the Trust patients, clients & staff more vulnerable to crime
- b) (Section 38) permits the withholding of information if there is a risk to Health and Safety of Individuals within the Trust. To withhold there must be a likelihood of endangerment to the physical or mental health of any individual

Section 31 – Law Enforcement Section

**Section 31(1)(a)** states that information is exempt if its disclosure is likely to prejudice the prevention or detection of crime. ICO guidance states that this can be used to protect information on a public authority's systems which would make it more vulnerable to crime. It can be used by a public authority that has no law enforcement function:

- To protect the work of one that does

- To withhold information that would make anyone, including the public authority itself, more vulnerable to crime

### Section 38 – Health and safety

**Section 38 states** that as a security attack may lead to the placing of patient and client information into the public domain, the release of the requested information could potentially lead to harm for a number of patients (in a mental health context or may lead to physical harm)

The Trust believes there is a link between the risk endangerment for data subjects and the disclosure of the requested information. There would likely be a substantial detrimental effect on the physical or mental health of patients and clients, should the requested information be released

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 this letter acts as a Refusal Notice in respect of question 1.

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](mailto: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

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**Rebecca Manning**  
**Information Governance Officer**

**Please provide, under the Freedom of Information Act, the following information:**

**Q2. Routine Elective Reporting.**  
**Please provide the annual volumes for both 2023 and for 2024 sent to each provider, broken into the following:**

- a. Overnight Emergency**
- b. Routine Elective Reporting (MRI, CT)**
- c. Plain Film Reporting**
- d. Day time emergency reporting (1hr for example).**
- e. Split into each hospital within the Trust**

A2. Please see Table 1.

Please be advised that day time and overnight emergency reporting is completed in house, not sent to providers.

In regards to the requested breakdown by each Hospital, the 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 respect of the request for the data broken down by Hospital in question 1.

Table 1

<b>Category</b>	<b>2022/2023</b>	<b>2023/2024</b>
Overnight Emergency	Nil	Nil
Routine Elective Reporting (MRI, CT)	8,714	12,356
Plain Film Reporting	2,182	3,889
Day time emergency reporting (1hr for example)	Nil	Nil

**Q3. Start date, duration and end date of any contracts with tele-radiology providers?**

**Q4. Was the contract procured via a framework (direct award), mini-tender, or ITT procurement process?**

A3,4. In response to questions 3 and 4 please see Table 2.

Table 2

<b>Provider</b>	<b>Contract</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>End Date</b>	<b>Procured Via</b>
Provider 1	MRI/Ultrasound/CT/DEXA	2022/2023	01/01/2023	31/03/2023	Direct Award
Provider 2	MRI/Ultrasound/CT/DEXA	2023/2024	01/04/2023	31/12/2023	Direct Award
Provider 3	MRI/Ultrasound/CT/DEXA	2023/2024	01/01/2024	31/03/2024	Direct Award
Provider 4	MRI/Ultrasound/CT/DEXA	2024/2025	01/04/2024	30/06/2024	Direct Award
Provider 5	MRI/Ultrasound/CT	2024/2025	01/07/2024	31/12/2024	Direct Award
Provider 6	Radiology	2023/2024	01/04/2023	31/12/2024	Regional Procurement via Business Service Organisation (BSO) PaLs

**Q5. Who is the senior officer (outside of procurement) responsible for this contract?**

A5. The Assistant Director of Elective and Radiology Services.