



9 December 2024

Our Ref: FOI 323

Dear

**Freedom of Information Act 2000
Information in Relation to Healthcare Assistant 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 01 November 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 People and Organisational Development Services Directorate and is attached in Appendix A.

A response questions 1 to 4a has been provided by the People and Organisational Development Services & Finance and Estates Directorate and is attached in Appendix A.

In relation question 4b '***what was the trust spend per month, broken down by each agency supplier***', the Trust has decided not to release the information that is held for the following reasons:

The information requested in question 4b, is exempt from release under Section 43 (2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

This is a qualified exemption 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:

Section 43 (2) - (Prejudice to Commercial Interests, of the Freedom of Information Act 2000). The disclosure of such information would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the public authority holding it).

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 this statement acts as a Refusal Notice in respect of question 4b.

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

Q1. Please confirm how many shifts were sent out for locum agencies to fill (per month), for Band 2 and Band 3 HCAs for the months April – September 2024 by discipline, i.e. General, A&E, ITU, Paediatrics?

A1. Please see Table 1 for the number of shifts sent out for locum agencies to fill for Band 2 and Band 3 Health Care Assistants (HCA) from April to September 2024 by discipline.

Table 1

Discipline	April 2024	May 2024	June 2024	July 2024	August 2024	September 2024
Disability	56	62	61	69	72	57
Medicine & Cancer	1113	1266	1534	1371	1183	1327
Mental Health	376	328	526	541	602	566
Mental Health Services for Older People	236	174	198	257	223	198
Primary & Integrated Care	92	90	84	109	113	125
Surgery	341	357	367	389	327	400
Unscheduled Care	644	617	523	700	664	464
Woman & Acute Child Health	42	20	62	27	45	43

Q2. Please confirm how many of these shifts were filled by agencies per month for the same time span as detailed in question 1. (Please can this be broken down per agency)

A2. Please see Table 2 for the shifts filled by agencies out for Band 2 and Band 3 Health Care Assistants (HCA) from April to September 2024 by discipline.

Agency	April 2024	May 2024	June 2024	July 2024	August 2024	September 2024
Ann's	380	394	359	394	395	370
Axis	51	38	26	33	40	37
Carrick	68	102	107	70	83	83
Direct Medics	75	108	114	117	93	77
First Choice	90	80	87	71	95	77
Jark	40	23	22	39	19	27
Kennan	164	168	156	173	170	142
Knockdean	25	29	28	32	21	28

MBands	84	120	166	147	166	153
MedLocums	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	5	20
MPA	62	44	68	50	56	80
NCD	264	268	259	258	258	281
Next Steps	236	288	294	278	294	254
Placement	93	83	66	80	76	77
Rutledge	Nil	Nil	Nil	3	1	6
Staffline	31	44	32	30	23	18
Total Care	167	148	165	187	254	188
TTM	83	77	141	183	242	201
UK Recruitment	134	126	138	129	127	143

Q3. Please confirm how many shifts throughout the timescale detailed in question 1 were filled by off-framework agencies? Can this also be broken down per month?

A3. There were no shifts, from question 1, filled by off-framework agencies.

Q4a. Between April – September 2024?

A4a. Please see Table 3 for the total spend on agencies for Band 2 and Band 3 HCA's from April 2024 to September 2024.

Table 3

April 2024	May 2024	June 2024	July 2024	August 2024	September 2024
£685,387.48	£725,038.50	£625,574.95	£709,767.67	£487,148.48	£729,819.97