

10 December 2024

**Our Ref:** FOI 321

Dear

**Freedom of Information Act 2000  
Information in Relation to Medical 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 the above, which you requested on 1 November 2024.

A response to questions 1a, 1b, 2a & 2b has been provided by the Finance and Estates Directorate and is attached in Appendix A.

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

In relation question 1b, the Trust has provided the total medical locum spend per month per grade and speciality, however, in relation to the breakdown spend by agency, the Trust has decided not to release the information that is held for the following reasons:

The information requested in question 1b breakdown of agency spend, 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 1b, breakdown of agency spend.

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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**Keith McCollum**  
**Information Governance Team**

***In relation to your supply of locum Doctors, please could you provide the answers to the following requests for the period April - September 2024***

**Q1a. *Please could you confirm the total Trust Medical locum spend for framework and non-framework agencies?***

A1a. The South Eastern Trust spent £7,912,355 on Medical Locums relating to Framework and Non-Framework agencies in the period April to September 2024. See Table 1 for a breakdown of this spend in respect of Framework and Non-Framework agencies

Table 1

|                     | <b>Total £000's</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| On Contract Agency  | 6,917               |
| Off Contract Agency | 995                 |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>7,912</b>        |

**Q1b. *Please can you provide a breakdown of spend per month per grade and speciality for each agency?***

Ab. Please see Table 2 for a breakdown of spend per month per grade and speciality.

Table 2

|                        | <b>Apr-May Avg</b> | <b>Jun-24</b> | <b>Jul-24</b> | <b>Aug-24</b> | <b>Sep-24</b> |
|------------------------|--------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>On Contract</b>     | <b>£000's</b>      | <b>£000's</b> | <b>£000's</b> | <b>£000's</b> | <b>£000's</b> |
| CONSULTANT             | 426                | 336           | 60            | 436           | 349           |
| FOUND H/OFFICER 1 (F1) | 9                  | 11            | 7             | 13            | 20            |
| FOUND H/OFFICER 2 (F2) | 461                | 478           | 59            | 439           | 561           |
| SPECIALITY REG CORE    | 156                | 154           | 146           | 85            | 158           |
| SPECIALTY DOCTOR (NC)  | 176                | 155           | 69            | 96            | 175           |
| SPECIALTY REGISTRAR    | 312                | 41            | 49            | 139           | 237           |
| <b>Off Contract</b>    |                    |               |               |               |               |
| CONSULTANT             | 41                 | 47            | 48            | 58            | 44            |
| FOUND H/OFFICER 2 (F2) | -                  | -             | -             | 0             | 1             |
| SPECIALITY REG CORE    | 16                 | 50            | 16            | 26            | 19            |
| SPECIALTY DOCTOR (NC)  | 21                 | 19            | 15            | 9             | 13            |
| SPECIALTY REGISTRAR    | 87                 | 100           | 78            | 70            | 53            |

\* Drop in spend in Month 4 due to credit notes and GL adjustments

**Q2a. Please could you confirm the total Trust spend for the recruitment of permanent & fixed term doctors?**

A2a. This information is not captured by the Trust, therefore we are unable to provide a response.

**Q2b. Also, please can you provide a break-down per month per grade and speciality for each agency?**

A2. As this information is not captured by the Trust this question does not apply.