



6 December 2024

Our Ref: FOI 320

Dear

**Freedom of Information Act 2000
Information in Relation to Nursing 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 29 October 2024. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding to your request. Thank you for your understanding and forbearance.

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

In relation to question 4b '**what was the trust spend per month, broken down by each agency supplier**' I would like to advise you that the Trust has decided not to release the breakdown by agency for the following reasons:

The following information requested is exempt from release under Section 43 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 letter 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 5 Nurses for August and 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 5 Nurses for August and September 2024, broken down by discipline.

Table 1

Discipline	August 2024	September 2024
Disability	97	114
Elective and Radiology Services	51	57
Healthcare in Prison	213	237
Medicine and Cancer	1418	1418
Mental Health	336	350
Mental Health Services for Older People	59	67
Primary and Integrated Care	64	49
Surgery	450	446
Unscheduled Care	519	537
Women & Acute Child Health	27	40
Emergency Department Transfer Team	15	18

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 number shifts filled by agencies to fill for Band 5 Nurses for August and September 2024, broken down by discipline.

Table 2

Agency	August 2024	September 2024
Allied & Clinical	82	80
Axis	390	432
BFS	181	173
Carrick	1	1
Concept	1	Nil
Direct Medics	539	629
First Choice	12	8
Frontline	380	372
Knockdean	19	15
Medlocums	116	156
MPA	3	13
NC Healthcare	581	487
NW Care	Nil	7
Oberon	74	Nil
Peninsula	39	25
Placement B Group	183	168

Plan B	30	48
Pure HC	16	45
Red Group	9	9
TTM	49	58

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 filled by off-framework agencies.

Q4a. For August and September 2024 what was the trust spend per month?

A4a. Please see Table 3 for the total paid to agencies for Band 5 Nurses for August and September 2024.

Table 3

August 2024	September 2024	Total
£933,262.17	£1,325,558.74	£2,258,820.19