

23 December 2024

**Our Ref:** FOI / 385

Dear

**Freedom of Information Act 2000  
Information in relation to Nitazenes and Fentanyl**

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 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 Planning, Performance & Informatics 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](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**

**Q1. The total number of deaths where nitazenes and fentanyl were identified or suspected from January 1st, 2019 to the current date. Please break down the data by calendar year.**

A1. Due to the Trust coding structure, the Trust is unable to provide a breakdown of deaths where only Nitazenes and Fentanyl were identified.

However the Trust can provide the data in regards to overdoses where poisoning has occurred by synthetic narcotics and Nitazenes and Fentanyl are covered by this category along with a range of other possible drugs.

The data provided is from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024, due to the current clinical coding completion.  
There were no in hospital deaths recorded.

**Q2. Any data on reported overdoses and hospitalisations where nitazenes and fentanyl were identified or suspected from January 1st, 2019 to the current date. Please break down the data by calendar year.**

A2. As detailed in A2, data can be provided on overdoses where poisoning has occurred by synthetic narcotics and Nitazenes and Fentanyl are covered by this category.

Please see Table 1 for data provided from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024 due to current clinical coding completion.

Table 1

Year of Discharge	Discharges
2019	23
2020	19
2021	12
2022	18
2023	18
2024 (to 30/04/24)	<5

Where numbers in Table 1 are 1-4, in line with Trust policy, it is given as <5, to reduce any risk of identification of individual patients.

**Q3. Provide the number of cases in which nitazenes and fentanyl were recorded in toxicology reports for patients attending healthcare facilities between January 1st, 2019 to the current date.**

**Q4. Please provide copies of any reports, surveys, or risk assessments on nitazenes conducted by or shared with your health authority during January 1st, 2019 to the current date.**

A3&4. In response to questions 3 and 4 the information requested 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 response of questions 3 and 4.