



24 February 2025

Our Ref: FOI 35

Dear

Freedom of Information Act 2000
Information in relation to Social Workers Dedicated to Special Needs
Children and Adults.

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 17 September 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 Children's Service and Social Care 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) 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. How many social workers do you have dedicated to children with special needs as of August 31st, 2024? How many social workers have you had dedicated to children with special needs on the same date for the years 2019 - 2023 inclusive?

A1. Please see Table 1.

Table 1

Date	No. of Social Workers WTE*
August 2019	16.5
August 2020	16.5
August 2021	16.5
August 2022	16.5
August 2023	16.5
August 2024	16.5

*Whole Time Equivalent

Q2. How many social workers do you have dedicated to adults with special needs as of August 31st, 2024? How many social workers have you had dedicated to adults with special needs on the same date for the years 2019 - 2023 inclusive?

A2. Please see Table 2.

Table 2

Date	No. of Social Workers WTE
August 2019	22.87
August 2020	21.47
August 2021	24.28
August 2022	22.61
August 2023	18.68
August 2024	22.43

Please note figures exclude bank staff and staff on a career break

Q3. What is the average caseload for each social worker dedicated to children with special needs as of August 31st, 2024? What is the case load on the same date for the years 2019 - 2023 inclusive?

A3. The Trust Children's Disability Service do not hold data in regards to staff caseloads for previous years and therefore is unable to provide the requested information for the years 2019 to 2023.

Current caseloads, on average, are 20 cases per social worker, these are the most complex high need cases. Assessed Year in Employment (AYE) staff hold 15 cases each, these are less complex cases.

Please be advised that AYE's have a protected caseload for the first year.

Q4. What is the average caseload for each social worker dedicated to adults with special needs as of August 31st, 2024? What is the case load on the same date for the years 2019 - 2023 inclusive?

A4. The Trust Adult's Disability Service do not hold data in regards to staff caseloads for previous years and therefore is unable to provide the requested information for the years 2019 to 2023.

The current average caseload is 64 cases for each social worker.

Q5. How many respite days was the trust able to offer during each year 2019 - 2023? Please may I have an annual breakdown?

A5. Please see Table 3 for the timeframe 2020 to 2024.

Please note that, the Trust is unable to provide the requested information for 2019 as there was not one designated Manager who recorded the information, it was recorded across multiple service managers within the Trust and therefore the information is not held on a central system.

Table 1

Date	No. of Overnight Short Breaks
April 2020 to September 2020	Nil
October 2020 to March 2021	279
April 2021 to September 2021	301
October 2021 to March 2022	479
April 2022 to September 2022	370
October 2022 to March 2023	356
April 2023 to September 2023	246
October 2023 to March 2024	240
April 2024 to September 2024	253