



3 February 2025

**Our Ref:** FOI 432

Dear

**Freedom of Information Act 2000  
Information in relation to Medical Agency**

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 18 December 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 Finance & Estates Directorate and is attached in Appendix A.

In relation to question 2, 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 2, the Trust has provided a breakdown of the recruitment agency spend per staff grade from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021, 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 2, breakdown of agency spend.

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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**

**Q1. Please confirm the total on-contract and off-contract spend for locum agency doctors from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021.**

A1. Please see Table 1 for the total on and off contract spend for Locum Agency Medical and Dental Doctors from 01/04/2020 to 31/03/2021.

Table 1

Type	Spend
On Contract	£12,745,195
Off Contract	£2,072,964

**Q2. Please also provide a break-down of spend per grade, speciality and by each recruitment agency by company name.**

A2. Please see table 2 for grade and spend with recruitment agencies however, as there is not the same detail held from 2020/21 as for more recent periods, it has not been possible to split this information further, particularly by on/off contract

Table 2

Staff Grade	Total Spend
Consultant	£3,131,172
Found H/Officer 1 (F1)	£29,072
Found H/Officer 2 (F2)	£7,338,759
Specialist Registrar	£635,600
Specialty Doctor (Nc)	£2,042,290
Specialty Registrar	£10,135
Staff Grade Practitioner	£1,631,131