



29 August 2025

Our Ref: FOI 1327

Dear

**Freedom of Information Act 2000
Information in relation to Peripheral Neuropathic Pain**

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 4 August 2025.

A response to each of the questions raised has been provided by the Medicine, Unscheduled Care and Cancer Services 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. Patient Numbers & Treatment Modalities (Last 12 Months)

For each hospital site or service, please provide:

a. The number of patients seen for each of the following conditions:

- **PSNP**
- **CRNP (please split into surgically induced and chemotherapy-induced)**
- **PDPN**
- **Please also break this down by hospital department.**

Treatment Modalities**b. For each hospital site or service, please indicate Yes or No as to whether the following treatment modalities are available for PNP. Where stated yes please provide patient numbers for the latest 12-month period.**

- **Gabapentin prescriptions**
- **Botulinum toxin (Botox) injections**
- **TENS (Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation)**
- **Acupuncture (including PENS – Percutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation)**
- **Theatre-based nerve stimulation procedures (e.g., spinal cord stimulators or other implanted/surgical neuromodulation devices)**

Q2. Service Provision.**a. Does your Trust or provider offer specific or dedicated services for PSNP, CRNP, and/or PDPN?**

If yes, please list each relevant service or site (e.g., pain clinic, neurology clinic, diabetic foot clinic, community pain service) along with their addresses.

b. For each listed site or service, please indicate:

- **The types of healthcare professionals routinely involved (e.g., pain specialists, neurologists, specialist nurses, physiotherapists, psychologists)**
- **The number of staff per role (headcount or FTE if available)**

Q3. Referral Pathways & Service Specifications.**a. Are there established care pathways, referral criteria, or service specifications for PSNP, CRNP, and/or PDPN?**

If yes, please supply relevant documents or summaries.

If not, please clarify whether these conditions fall under broader chronic pain, MSK, diabetes, or oncology pathways.

Q4. Clinical Guidelines, Protocols, Strategic Plans.

a. Has the Trust developed or contributed to any strategic plans, business cases, or service specifications for PSNP, CRNP, or PDPN? If so, please provide relevant documents, including any timelines and associated funding information.

b. Are there any specific clinical guidelines, care pathways, or treatment protocols in use? For example:

- **NICE CG173**
- **NEUPSIG**
- **Local pathways for diabetes- or oncology-related neuropathy**

c. If yes, please provide copies or summaries of key components.

Q5. Funding & Budgets.

a. What was the total expenditure on neuropathic pain services in the most recent full financial year?

If no specific figure is available, please provide overall pain management funding and any known distribution (e.g., primary/community vs secondary care).

b. Please indicate the type of funding, e.g. tariff or block contract

Q6. Planned or Recent Service Changes.

a. Are there any recent, ongoing, or planned changes to:

- **Commissioning arrangements**
- **Referral pathways**
- **Service structure**
- **Clinical treatment options for PSNP, CRNP, or PDPN?**

b. If yes, please provide details, including the relevant sites, timelines, and the rationale for these changes.

A1-6. In response to questions 1 to 6, 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 letter acts as a Refusal Notice.