

12 January 2017

**Our Ref:** RFI 19123

Dear

**Freedom of Information Act 2000  
Information in relation to diagnoses of Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic  
Fatigue Syndrome (M.E.)**

I am writing to confirm that the South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust (the Trust) has now completed its search for the information relating to the above which you requested on 8 December 2016.

A response to each of the questions raised has been provided by the Medical Specialties Directorate and is attached in Appendix A.

*In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 this letter acts as a Refusal Notice.*

Under the terms of the legislation, if you are unhappy with this response you have the right to seek a review within the Trust in the first instance. If you wish to do so, please write to me at the address below.

If after such a review you are still unhappy with the response, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner who will undertake an independent review. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, SK9 5AF.

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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**L McAree (Miss)  
Head of Information Governance &  
Directorate Support**

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Appendix A

1. *How many people in the HSC Trust are:*
  - a. *Diagnosed with myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome (M.E.)?*
  - b. *Estimated to have M.E.?*
3. *What other local services are people with M.E. directed to after diagnosis?*
4. *Have people diagnosed with M.E. in the locality been referred to out-of-area specialist M.E. services? If any:*
  - a. *How many were referred?*
  - b. *What was the overall cost to the HSC Trust for the out-of-area provision of specialist services for people with M.E.?*

A1,3,4. The information requested is not recorded on a central information system, and therefore the Trust is unable to provide the information requested.

2. *Are there specialist local services for people with M.E. commissioned within the HSC Trust? If yes:*
  - a. *What services are commissioned?*
  - b. *How much does it cost annually to run each service?*

A2. The Medical Specialties Directorate is not aware of any specific services having been commissioned by the Health & Social Care Board (HSCB) for patients with ME. Patients with a query diagnosis are referred by their General Practitioner (GP) to a range of specialties (Neurology, Rheumatology, Pain Management etc) and any costs arising from their investigations, care and treatment would be captured within each of these specialities.