

Information Governance

6 September 2017

Our Ref: RFI 21072

Dear

**Freedom of Information Act 2000
Information in Relation to Prison Mental Health Care: Provision for Prisoners
with Personality Disorder**

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 August 2017.

A response to each of the questions raised has been provided by the Adult Services and Prison Healthcare Directorate and is attached in Appendix A.

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

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

I should be grateful if you could provide me with information on the following matters.

As you may be aware, up to 65% of male and 49% of female prisoners may be diagnosable with a personality disorder or personality-related difficulties. As the healthcare provider for Northern Ireland's adult prison populace, could the Trust please confirm:

- if it presently offers any of the forms of psychotherapy that have an evidence-base for efficacy in personality disorder, for instance mentalisation-based therapy (MBT), dialectical behavioural therapy (DBT) or schema therapy;*
- how many PD specialist staff are presently working in prisons, whether on a fixed or visiting basis.*

If such interventions/practitioners are not in place, could the Trust kindly explain how prisoners are obtaining the same level of mental healthcare as non-prisoners (to which they are, of course, entitled), in light of the fact that the Trust provides DBT/DBT skills outside of custodial settings through its Tier Three PD Service?

Finally, if these specialist workers/evidence-based therapies are not presently accessible to the prison populace, or if the services currently offered are highly limited (such as only one or two practitioners) could the Trust confirm how it intends to address this as part of its ongoing prison mental healthcare strategies?

Within Forensic Services there is a higher prevalence of personality disorder than the general population. Within a prison context this would include individuals with personality disorder or personality disorder traits which are in keeping with antisocial personality disorder, paranoid personality disorder and borderline personality disorder.

Within Prison Health Care all staff receive training in KUF (Knowledge and Understanding Framework) which is a training model commissioned by the Department of Health and Ministry of Justice. This training model aims to increase the capabilities and skills of all staff to work more effectively with individuals with personality disorder. The majority of health care staff also attend DBT (Dialectical Behaviour Therapy) Essential Skills training which includes fundamental skills such as core mindfulness, distress tolerance, emotional regulation and interpersonal effectiveness.

The above knowledge and skills are incorporated in all staff engagements with service users in the context of their health care delivery.

In addition the Trust delivers a range of individual and group based therapeutic interventions. These interventions include:

- Women's Personality Disorder Group work programme delivered in Hyde Bank Wood – this pilot programme is being reviewed to consider options for implementation across other prison sites

- Mindfulness group work programmes delivered across a range of prison sites and groups
- SHARE – Self Harm Awareness, Recognition and Education – programme targeted at increasing awareness, building resilience and reducing levels of self-harming behaviour. The programme is delivered on both an individual and group based formats

The above programmes are delivered to individuals with a diagnosis of personality disorder and to those individuals who have a range of mental health needs who benefit from these evidenced based interventions. The Trust continues to review the range of interventions delivered and continually seek to increase access to therapies and interventions which will reduce psychological morbidity and which can be delivered in the context of a prison regime.