

24 November 2016

Our Ref: RFI 18543

Dear

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Information relating to Money and Mental Health Policy Institute

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 30 September 2016.

A response to each of the questions raised 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

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Q1. *Whether you consider financial difficulties in your local health needs assessment?*

A1. All patients referred to mental health services are assessed through the Assessment Centre. A comprehensive assessment is conducted, which includes the patient's financial and housing status. In addition the Hospital Social Work Care Pathway will identify needs regarding finances, debt, welfare, housing or legal issues. Patients on the ward are routinely asked about their financial circumstances. Peer advocate volunteers provide advice and guidance around these issues.

Q2. *Whether your mental health service users (for both primary and secondary care) are routinely asked about their financial circumstances or difficulties?*

A2. Yes. As above, all new patients assessed by the Mental Health Service are asked about their financial circumstances (see attached section of assessment).

Q3. *Whether you commission or run, either solely or in partnership with another agency (e.g. through Local Commissioning Groups) any specialist services like those listed above for people who have both financial difficulties and mental health problems?*

A3. The Trust has contractual arrangements with the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), MINDWISE, PRAXIS and Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health (NIAMH) for people with mental health problems who require financial, welfare and debt advice.

Q4. *Whether you have a formal and/or informal working arrangement with any external organisations (e.g. Citizens' Advice Bureaux) providing financial, welfare or debt advice, and if so which one(s)?*

A4. Financial difficulties identified by the inpatient care pathway are addressed in a range of ways. If the individual requires assistance to apply for benefits, this is provided by the hospital social worker or they are offered the support of Mindwise.

Any debts identified are addressed in a number of ways. The hospital social worker may contact the agency or company with which the individual is in debt, to directly negotiate the debt being written off or agree a payment plan. Alternatively, the individual may be referred to Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) or Mindwise. Christians Against Poverty may also be contacted on the individual's behalf to address debt and money management issues or alternatively the Debt NI advice line.

If budgeting is identified as an issue there are a number of support options. The ward occupational therapist assesses ability regarding finances and budgeting and provides skill work regarding this and 'shopping planning' etc.

They can also make onward referral to the Recovery College. Hospital social workers make referrals to Beacon Floating Support or Praxis both of which provide courses/teach skills on budgeting.

If practical support is required due to financial difficulties when an individual is being discharged from hospital the hospital social worker may contact Kiltonga, Salvation Army, Belfast Central Mission or St Vincent de Paul for food parcels or furniture and household goods or assistance with oil or coal for heating.

In respect of legal issues identified, the hospital social worker would refer the individual to CAB or the Law Society.

For welfare needs hospital social workers make referrals to Beacon Floating Support or Praxis for assistance with issues such as medication concurrence, developing cooking skills, domestic skills and education regarding environmental safety. Social and education groups are also accessed via YMCA, NIAMH, New Horizons and Beacon.

Hospital social workers have, over time, developed a knowledge base of services available and what works best in particular circumstances. MINDWISE advocates may also be contracted to provide guidance on the above as well as weekly advocate clinics on the hospital sites.

Drop in service is provided in Downpatrick MINDWISE building (30 hours per week) a total of 60 hours per week advocacy is provided across the Trust area.

Cause carer advocates provide a similar service for mental health carers.

The Trust's Recovery College does not currently facilitate a learning programme associated with managing finances. It is potentially an idea for future development in the college.

Q5. How many people using your primary and secondary mental health services are referred to or provided with a specialist service that addresses financial needs?

A5. The Trust is not required to capture the information requested as part of its Mental Health Service or for any other business function. Therefore I can confirm that the Trust does not hold the information you have requested.