

11 February 2019

Our Ref: RFI 26968

Dear

**Freedom of Information Act 2000
Information in Relation to Hospital Staff Counselling Service**

I am writing to confirm that the South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust (the Trust) has now completed its search for information relating to the above which you requested on 21 January 2019.

A response to each of the questions raised has been provided by the Human Resources & Corporate Affairs 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

**Jane McCormick
Information Governance Assistant**

Overview: I would like to find out if the number of hospital staff accessing the trust's staff mental health/counselling service is increasing, and why.

Q1. Does the hospital trust have a staff support and counselling service? If yes, what is it called? eg the Staff Support and Counselling Service. Please clarify whether the service is specifically for staff wanting support with work related issues, or whether staff can access the service for any personal issues unrelated to work. Please confirm what is provided, e.g. six free counselling sessions.

A1. Trust staff have access to counselling services provided by Inspire Workplaces. Staff have access to four one hour sessions free at the point of delivery. Staff may access the service for both work-related matters and personal issues.

Q2. How many staff members used the service in 2016, 2017 and 2018? Please give a total for each calendar year not tax year if possible, so, for example, 100 in 2016, 100 in 2017 and 100 in 2018. If the Trust manages more than one hospital, please confirm if the figures provided are for all hospitals.

A2. Based on the information supplied by Inspire, the sessions were arranged for staff across the Trust. See Table 1 below. No further breakdown is available.

Year	Face to face sessions	Telephone sessions
2016	744	31
2017	736	25
2018	730	5

Q3. Please confirm if you record the overall reasons why staff are accessing the service; e.g. you may have headings like, 'personal stressors (including anxiety/depression)' and 'work related stressors (including anxiety and depression)', etc.

A3. Reasons for accessing counselling services:

- **Emotional/Personal** (Anxiety, depression, bereavement, relationship difficulties, financial difficulties, addiction)
- **Marital/Family** (home issues, partner issues, separation, divorce)
- **Personal Traumas**
- **Health related** (illness)
- **Work/Career** (work-related stress, work relationships, role difficulties, career issues, bullying, harassment)

Q4. *If time allows, please give a breakdown of the reasons staff are accessing the service, e.g. 2018, 40%/40 people for personal stressors and 60%/60 people for work related stress.*

A4. This information is not held centrally by the Trust.