

25 April 2019

Our Ref: RFI 28079

Dear

**Freedom of Information Act 2000
Information in relation to Biomedical Science**

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 28 March 2019.

A response to each of the questions raised has been provided by the Hospital 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

**Catherine Treanor
Information Governance Assistant**

Q1. How many laboratories (please include breakdown of sites/disciplines if possible) are there within your Trust?

A1. There is one laboratory based at the Ulster Hospital. The Laboratory hosts 3 disciplines; Clinical Biochemistry, Haematology/Blood Transfusion and Microbiology. These are supported by one central specimen reception and a team of administration staff. There are also a number of Medical staff associated with the laboratory.

Q2. What is the headcount of laboratory staff (please include breakdown of sites/departments/roles if possible) within your Trust?

A2. Please see Table 1 below.

Table 1

Departments	Total	Medical/Scientific	BMS	Lab Support staff	Admin or Clerical **
Administration	6	0	0	0	6
CSR**	18	0	0	18	0
Biochemistry	32	2	28	2	0
Haematology/BT	35	4	30	1	0
Microbiology	31	4	21	6	0
Total	122	10	79	27	6

*Central Specimen Reception

** Includes Quality, ICT and Managerial roles.

Q3. How many patient samples or 'reportable laboratory activities' are processed (please include breakdown of sites/departments if possible) by your Trust each year (please include the three most recent available years' numbers)?

A3. Please see Table 2 below. Please note the years run from 1st April to 31st March and the figures represent number of tests performed each year.

Table 2

Departments	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Biochemistry	4,529,273	4,809,693	5,123,025
Haematology/BT	537,131	536,987	527,491
Microbiology	138,958	146,972	148,951

Q4. What number (and percentage) of your Trust's patients have a sample processed as part of their treatment?

A4. This information is not held.

Q5. How many patient samples are taken by your Trust but not processed/analysed by NHS laboratory staff? (IE: outsourced)

A5. All samples are analysed by NHS laboratory staff, even those referred to other Northern Ireland (NI) or United Kingdom (UK) hospital laboratories.

Q6. If any, where are outsourced patient samples sent? (please include company names/addresses and number of samples sent each year)

A6. The bulk of samples are sent to Laboratories in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSCT). A significant number of others would be sent to Public Health England based at Colindale. Small numbers (< 10 per year) would be sent to a range of other hospital laboratories across the UK.