

17 May 2019

Our Ref: RFI 28248

Dear

**Freedom of Information Act 2000
Information in Relation to the Use of Tissue Expanders**

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 10 April 2019. I apologise for the delay in responding to you.

A response to the question 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

Jane McCormick
Information Governance Assistant

Q1. *I make a request for freedom of information on the use of 133 tissue expanders beyond the 6 month limit recommended by the manufacturer. I wish to know are the South Eastern Trust insured to use surgical accessories and equipment outside the manufacturers remit?*

A1. The Trust aims not to use tissue expanders outside the 6 month limit recommended by the manufacturer, except in circumstances when the waiting list for surgery to remove them exceeds this time frame. Unfortunately, waiting lists for breast surgery are longer than the Trust would expect.