

25 June 2021

**Our Ref:** RFI 39620

Dear

**Freedom of Information Act 2000**

**RE: Information Relating To SarsCoV2 (Covid19) and also PCR Test Cycles**

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 16 June, 2021.

Following a search of our paper and electronic records, I have established that the information you requested in relation to Q1, Q3 and Q4. is not centrally recorded by the Trust. However, the information you requested may be held by the Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency (NISRA). NISRA are the official source for publication of accurate data. If you wish to pursue your request I would suggest you contact NISRA on [demography@nisra.gov.uk](mailto:demography@nisra.gov.uk)

In response to Question 2 has been provided by the Planning, Performance and Informatics 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](mailto: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

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**Susan Clarke**  
**Information Governance Assistant**

## Appendix A

**Q1. With regards to a Freedom of Information request can you please give me the number of deaths whereby SarsCoV2 (Covid 19) is the sole cause of death listed, there were no other pre-existing conditions or comorbidities noted on the death certificate, covering the period from March 2020 until present day. If there are any, can you please give me the average age of the deceased?**

A1. As noted in the covering letter, this information is not centrally located within the Trust.

**Q2. I would also like the number of cycles you run your PCR tests on normally as well as the number of cycles that you are running for PCR tests where the patient/recipient is known to have been vaccinated with one of the recent SarsCoV 2 (Covid 19) vaccines. If there is any difference in the number of cycles being used in relation to the patient's vaccination status, could you please explain why?**

A2. SEHSCT laboratory operates two real time PCR platforms; the GeneXpert and the Seegene. The GeneXpert is a low throughput rapid assay and automatically runs for 45 cycles unless the signal from the SARS-CoV-2 target reaches a predetermined threshold before the full 45 cycles have been completed. The early termination of the GeneXpert assay when a positive is detected is possible because each sample is processed individually. The Seegene platform is a high throughput batch analyser and 45 cycles are performed on all samples tested in a batch. To date, a patient's vaccination status does not alter the number of cycles used.

**Q3. I would also like to know how many children under the age of 16 that have been logged as a death with SarsCoV2 without any underlying health issues.**

**Q4. Finally, can you please advise of how many people have died after receiving a SarsCoV2 vaccination from the date of the rollout?**

A3.- A4. As noted in the covering letter, this information is not centrally located within the Trust.