

Information Governance

18 November 2021

Our Ref: RFI 41055
Your Ref: AR/KR

Dear

**Freedom of Information Act 2000
Information in Relation to parenting assessment tools/guidance for Looked
After Children for parents whose origin is outside N. I.**

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 23 September 2021. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding and thank you for your patience.

A response to each of the questions raised has been provided by the Children's Services and Social Work 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

Joyce Batch
Information Governance Officer

We refer to the above and would be obliged if you could provide us with a copy of all documentation, internal memorandum, guidance, policies, emails and all material of any kind whatsoever held by the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act 2000, in respect of the following:

Q1 *The Trust criteria/guidance on formulating culturally appropriate capacity to change assessments for parents whose country of origin is not Northern Ireland in respect of LAC children.*

A1. Within the Trust, there is no criteria/guidance on formulating culturally appropriate 'Capacity to Change Assessment' or 'Parenting Assessment'. It would however be anticipated, that all assessments completed with families, are conducted using a Person Centred Approach which would take account the culture of the parents.

When the Trust's 'Family Assessment and Intervention Services', are working with families whose country of origin is not Northern Ireland, they will advise parents at the referral meeting, that they will complete a session focusing on cultural awareness raising. This involves the parents taking the lead and discussing their own social history, talking about their culture and 'normal practice' and talking about the expected role of each parent within their culture. This allows for a conversation about differences that may exist between the parents cultural and what is acceptable under Northern Ireland Legislation. This joint parenting session is very beneficial as the parents may provide different views on what is acceptable within their culture and this opens up discussion.

The Social Worker will ensure they are informed regarding the parents' culture and what is considered 'normal practice', by sourcing texts and articles, researching online or by linking in with other agencies e.g. Bryson Multi-cultural Centre or specific groups such as the Islamic Centre in Belfast. Staff have also spoken to interpreters and asked about their culture to raise awareness. This process also helps check/verify the information provided by parents.

Within the Trust it would be anticipated that all staff will engage with parents in a culturally sensitive manner but ultimately they will take account of Children Order Ni 1995 and Safeguarding Board NI Core Policies and Procedures, to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all Children.

Q2 *Identify culturally appropriate assessment tools/ services internal/external, used by Social Services in assessments of parents whose country of origin is not Northern Ireland.*

A2 The Trust do not hold the information as requested in Question 2.