

Information Governance

3rd May 2023

Our Ref: RFI 50118

Dear

**Freedom of Information Act 2000
Information in Relation to the Minor Injuries Units at Newtownards and
Bangor and replace with Urgent Care Centre at Dundonald.**

I am writing to confirm that the South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust (the Trust) has now completed its search for information relating to above which you requested on 28 March 2023. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding to your request. Thank you for your understanding and forbearance.

A response to each of the questions raised has been provided by the Planning, Performance & 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) 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

Rebecca Manning
Information Governance Manager (Interim)

Q1. On what information was the Proposal to close Minor Injuries Units at Newtownards and Bangor and replace with Urgent Care Centre at Dundonald based and the decision arrived at?

A1. The Trust's proposal in relation to the future of urgent and emergency care provision in the Ards and North Down area was based on the strategic context and need for change as outlined in the Trust's consultation document. This includes the Regional Review of Urgent and Emergency Care and the 'No More Silos' action plan led by the Department of Health (DoH).

A copy of the Trust's consultation document, which outlines this information, can be accessed via the following website:

<https://setrust.hscni.net/getinvolved/consultations/>

No decision has been taken at this stage in relation to the future provision of urgent and emergency care services in the Ards and North Down area.

Q2. Was a feasibility study carried out with cost estimates and is this information available?

A2. A formal feasibility study with cost estimates was not carried out. A number of potential options were considered on how the Trust could potentially realise the future vision for urgent and emergency care services. These options were considered against a range of key factors.

Please refer to the Trust's consultation document for further information.

Q3. Was the proposal considered with the Government Greening Proposals 2021 – 2025 applied to the decision making process?

A3. The proposal relating to the future provision of urgent and emergency care services was not considered with the Government Greening Proposals 2021 – 2025 as it is the Trust's understanding that the Greening Government Commitments 2021 – 2025 do not include devolved administrations.

Q4. In these times of fiscal restraint were other options examined and cost estimates prepared?

A4. All options considered are outlined within the Trust's consultation document as highlighted above.

Additional options or cost estimates other than those outlined in the formal consultation document were therefore not examined or prepared.

Q5. Was a feasibility study carried out and cost estimates prepared to locate the proposed Urgent Care Centre at the Newtownards site by upgrading and expanding the existing Minor Injuries Unit? This upgrade to be carried out in tandem with the closure of Bangor Minor Injuries Unit.

A5. A formal feasibility study and cost estimates were not carried out to locate the proposed Urgent Care Centre at the Newtownards site by upgrading and expanding the existing Minor Injuries Unit. The Ards Hospital site is not suitable to deliver the future vision for urgent and emergency care services. It does not enable the provision of an Urgent Care Centre as the appropriate clinical services, diagnostics and specialist staff resources are not available at that location.

All options considered are outlined within the Trust's consultation document as highlighted above.

Q6. Were the social and economic effects on the patient base residing in the ANDBC area examined and evaluated?

A6. In line with the Trust's Equality Scheme and legislative requirements, the Trust carried out an Equality Impact Assessment and Rural Needs Impact Assessment to consider impacts of the proposal on the local population of Ards and North Down. Copies of this information can be found alongside the Trust's consultation document via the following link:
<https://setrust.hscni.net/getinvolved/consultations/>