

15 April 2022

**Our Ref:** RFI 43402

Dear

**Freedom of Information Act 2000  
Information in relation to Children's Services Social Work Staff Turnover and  
head Count**

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 4 March 2022. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding to your request, due to the impact of Winter Pressures that the Trust is currently facing. Thank you for your understanding and forbearance of this matter.

A response to each of the questions raised has been provided by the Children's Services & 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](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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**Rebecca Manning**  
**Information Governance Assistant**

**Q1. What was your staff turnover rate for registered social workers working in child protection or with children in need in each of the following years? (Where staff turnover is calculated as the headcount of full-time equivalent (FTE) registered social workers leaving in the year divided by the headcount of FTE registered social workers in post at 1 January 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 & 2021.**

A1. Staff turnover is calculated as the FTE of permanent registered social workers band 6 and above, including band 5 Assessed Year in Employment (AYE) social workers, leaving in the year divided by the average FTE of permanent registered social workers in post as at 31 December.

Please see Table 1 for turnover rate.

Table 1

Calculated Year as at 31 December	Turnover %
2017	7.18
2018	6.72
2019	8.30
2020	4.75
2021	9.17

**Q2. What was your staff turnover rate for social work assistants working in child protection or with children in need in each of the following years? (Where staff turnover rate is calculated as the headcount of full-time equivalent (FTE) social work assistants leaving in the year divided by the headcount of FTE social work assistants in post at 1 January) 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 & 2021.**

A2. Staff turnover is calculated as the FTE of permanent social work assistants band 3 & 4 leaving in the year divided by the average permanent FTE of social work assistants in post as at 31 December.

Please see Table 2 for turnover rate.

Table 2

Calculated Year as at 31 December	Turnover %
2017	7.17
2018	7.86
2019	5.67
2020	12.61
2021	11.35

**Q3. In your Trust's children's services department, what percentage of your registered social worker headcount was defined as newly qualified on 1 January in the following years? 2018, 2019, 2020 & 2021, 2022.**

A3. Please see Table 3.

Table 3

Year	% of No. of registered Social Workers newly qualified
2018	2.3
2019	8.5
2020	8.7
2021	6.7
2022	6.6

**Q4. In your Trust's children's services department, how many full time equivalent registered social workers were in post on 1 January in each of the following years? 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 & 2021.**

A4. Permanent and temporary registered social workers at band 6 and above, including band 5 AYE social workers, in post as at 31 December.

Please see Table 4.

Table 4

Year	No. of Permanent Social Workers	No. of Temporary Social Workers	Total
2017	345.65	21.70	367.35
2018	361.96	13.10	375.06
2019	357.72	8.50	366.22
2020	370.33	13.72	384.05
2021	374.41	13.64	388.05

**Q5. In your Trust's children's services department, how many full time equivalent agency staff were you employing as social workers on 1 January in each of the following years? 2018, 2019, 2020 & 2021, 2022.**

A5. Please see Table 5.

Table 5

Year	No. of Full Time Agency Social Workers
2018	Nil
2019	21
2020	48
2021	Nil
2022	5

**Q6. Do you have a shortage of social workers in your Trust's children's services department? If yes, how many full time equivalent social worker vacancies were recorded on your system as of 1 January 2022?**

A6. Yes, there is a shortage of Social Worker's within the Trusts Children's Services and Social Work.  
There are currently 62.8 whole time equivalent (WTE) vacant posts within the Trust.

**Q7. What was the total amount spent by your Trust's children's services department on agency social workers in each of the following years: 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 & 2021.**

A7. Please see Table 6.

Table 6

Year	Total Spent
2017-2018	£2,458,483
2018-2019	£2,464,322
2019-2020	£2,297,748
2020-2021	£2,407,123
2021-2022	£2,320,252