

21 April 2022

Our Ref: RFI 43610

Dear

Freedom of Information Act 2000

In Relation to: Is there a Policy in place to support staff on their period

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 17 March 2022. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding to your request.

A response to each of the questions raised has been provided by the HR & Corporate Affairs 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

Caroline Degans
Information Governance Assistant

Q1. Do you have a period policy for staff?

A1. There is no policy in relation to periods in place in the Trust.

Q2. If you do, when was it implemented and what does it say?

A2. As the Trust does not have a policy in relation to periods this question does not apply.

Q3. If not, are you planning to implement one?

A3. A policy is not currently in planning, but is being raised at a Health and Wellbeing Steering Group meeting.

Q4. Do you provide any free sanitary products for staff? If yes, for which staff and where?

A4. The provision of free sanitary products for staff had been piloted, providing free sanitary products within staff restrooms. Unfortunately, due to Covid these boxes had to be removed.

Q5. Are the needs of women who have health problems related to their periods (such as endometriosis) covered by any other policies?

A5. The needs of women who have health problems related to their periods (such as endometriosis) can be supportively managed by a compassionate and understanding manager, flexibility in working practices and the Managing Attendance Policy. Staff can be referred to Occupational Health if the condition impacts on attendance or ability to do their job.

Q6. What are you doing to ensure staff have the knowledge and support they need with any issues related to their menstrual cycle?

A6. In order to ensure staff have the knowledge and support they need with any issues related to their menstrual cycle there is information available to all staff via Livewell. Livewell is an internal web site available to all staff members providing guidance and advice on health and wellbeing issues.