

17 February 2022

Our Ref: RFI 42805

Dear Sir/Madam

**Freedom of Information Act 2000
Information in relation to Hydrotherapy and Aquatic Physiotherapy**

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 24 January 2022.

A response to each of the questions raised has been provided by the Hospital Services 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 Assistant**

Q1. On behalf of which NHS Trust / Health Board are you responding?

A1. The South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust.

Q2. Does your Trust / Health Board have access to a hydrotherapy pool?

A2. Yes.

Please note, the Trust use Hydrotherapy treatment within the Paediatric Services, the Trust do not provide this treatment within Adult Physiotherapy.

Q3. If you do have access are your hydrotherapy pools onsite or offsite?

A3. Access is offsite in a non NHS facility; they are located in the three special schools aligned to the Trust.

Q4. Were all your hydrotherapy pools open prior to the COVID-19 pandemic?

A4. No.

Q5. If you do not have access to hydrotherapy pools, please tick all answers that apply to answer why that is.

A5. Hydrotherapy pools are closed due to COVID-19.

Q6. How many hydrotherapy pools exist on your NHS Trust / Board's estate? Include those closed prior to COVID-19.

A6. There are no hydrotherapy pools on the Trust's estate, the 3 pools that the Trust use are located on the Education Boards estates.

Q7. What are your closed hydrotherapy pools / departments now used for?

A7. The Trust do not have hydrotherapy pools/departments, as the pools that the Trust use are owned by the Education Board, it is there decision on what the space is used for during pool closure.

Q8. Will all your hydrotherapy pools be re-opening?

A8. Yes, there are plans to reopen the hydrotherapy pools.

Q9. When are your hydrotherapy pools scheduled to re-open?

A9. All the pools are waiting on repairs – the time frame is not within the control of the Trust as the pools are all owned and maintained by Education Board.

Q10. If your hydrotherapy pools are not scheduled to reopen, why is that?

A10. N/A

Q11. If your hydrotherapy pools are not scheduled to reopen, has a full public consultation taken place?

A11. N/A

Q12. If your hydrotherapy pools are not scheduled to reopen has an equality impact assessment taken place?

A12. N/A

Q13. If your hydrotherapy pools are open or scheduled to open is / will your aquatic physiotherapy (hydrotherapy) service capacity be reduced as a result of COVID-19?

A13. Yes.

Q14. What capacity is / will you be able to offer compared to pre pandemic? Please enter a percentage (%).

A14. The capacity will be dependent on the clinical need of pupils; therefore the Trust is unable to provide a percentage.
Services will be reduced initially due to the current guidance indicating the need for the therapist wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), the children have very complex needs/are all non-mobile and held by staff during the pool session, two staff are required in the pool and two staff required poolside for changing and hoisting in and out of the pool.

Q15. Is / will your service be provided on a 1:1 basis?

A15. Yes.

Q16. Is / will your service be provided with the therapist instructing from poolside.

A16. Please refer to the response to Q14.

Q17. Approximately how many sessions did you have access to your hydrotherapy pools on a weekly basis pre pandemic? (Where one session = one morning, afternoon or evening clinic)

A17. The number of sessions was based on the clinical need of the pupils attending the school, it averaged three sessions per school.

Q18. Approximately how many sessions do you currently have access to your hydrotherapy pools on a weekly basis?

A18. The average is three per school per week.

Q19. Which services use your hydrotherapy pools?

A19. The Trust Paediatric Service use the Hydrotherapy Pools.

Q20. Are your hydrotherapy pools used by inpatient or outpatient services?

A20. The Service is for the pupils within the 3 special schools who require the Hydrotherapy treatment.

Q21. Prior to the pandemic did you provide out of hours access to your hydrotherapy pools to patient groups or private groups? e.g. NASS, Private Clinics (Please provide a list)

A21. N/A, please refer to the response to Q20.

Q22. Have these sessions restarted? (Please provide a list of those which have restarted)

A22. N/A

Q23. Do you currently audit the use and effectiveness of aquatic physiotherapy (hydrotherapy)?

Q24. Please list outcome measures or tools used to audit the use and effectiveness of aquatic physiotherapy (hydrotherapy)?

A23-24. Each pupil has individual goals set which are reviewed there are no specific tools used.

Q25. If you are happy to be contacted for further information to support aquatic physiotherapy (hydrotherapy) services remobilise please provide an email address below.

A25. N/A.