

5 October 2023

Our Ref: RFI 53392

Dear

**Freedom of Information Act 2000
Information in Relation to Salary Overpayments.**

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 8 September 2023.

A response to each of the questions raised has been provided by the People and Organisational Development 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 Officer

Q1. From the financial years 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23, how many individuals have the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust pursued over alleged salary “overpayments”?

A1. Please see Table 1 for the number of salary overpayments.

Table 1

Financial Year	Number of Overpayments
2018/2019	Records were not captured for this financial year.
2019/2020	370
2020/2021	404
2021/2022	342
2022/2023	623 (Please note: This increase was caused by a large number of travel expense overpayments)

Q2. If there have been any changes to the wording in employment contracts to staff employed by the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust from 2020?

A2. No changes have been made to the Trust’s employment contracts between 2020 and present date.

Q2a. If there have been changes, what are these changes?

A2a. N/A

Q3. What training was in place in 2018 for staff employed in the Human Resources and Payroll departments, in respect of, new starters, appointment to spine rates, and existing employee promotion spine rate applications? As mandatory training for new starters and any annual or subsequent training required.

A3. The Trusts Human Resources Department provides its staff with on the Job training on the correct application of the regionally agreed Starting Salary Guidance, which was developed in 2021 and explains the correct application of the starters appointment to spine rates, and existing employee promotion spine rate applications, which are undertaken in line with the Agenda for Change Terms & Conditions of Service. The nature of the training provided to HR Staff prior to the introduction of the Regional Starting Salary Guidance (ie. 2018-2021) was the same on the job training delivered by senior staff as it is now but using local documentation and processes.

Q3a. Has this training changed?

A3a. Yes, training has changed since the introduction of the Regional Starting Salary Guidance on 2021 as detailed above in question 3.