

Our Ref: RFI 56058

**Freedom of Information Act 2000
Information in Relation to Nursing Agency Spend**

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 23 January 2024. 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 Finance & Estates and the People & Organisational Development Directorates 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 Officer

Q1. Please confirm how many shifts were sent out for agencies to fill (per month), for Band 5 between Oct 23 – Dec 23 by discipline, i.e. General, A&E, ITU, paediatrics?

A1. Please see Table 1.

Table 1

Discipline	No. of Shifts		
	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
Adult Services - Disability	97	66	77
Adult Services – Healthcare in Prison	277	361	388
Adult Services – Mental Health	292	290	360
Hospital Services – Medical Specialities	733	950	731
Hospital Services – Medicine and Cancer	495	748	668
Hospital Services - Surgery	670	799	742
Hospital Services – Unscheduled Care	713	842	576
Woman & Acute Child Health	72	85	89
Mental Health Services Older People	90	109	76
Primary Care	57	82	51

Q2. Please confirm how many of these shifts were filled by agencies per month for the same timespan as detailed in Q1. (Please can this be broken down per agency)?

A2. Please see Table 2.

Table 2

Agency	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
Allied & Clinical	63	83	79
Axis	306	325	309
BFS	103	131	112
Carrick	2	8	4
Direct Medics	499	650	504
First Choice	22	21	18
Frontline	510	618	405
Medlocums	215	236	139
NC Healthcare	406	556	492
Oberon	363	386	326
Peninsula	58	92	70
Placement Group	156	186	151
TTM	83	77	71

Q3. Please confirm how many shifts throughout the timescale detailed in question 1 were filled by off-framework agencies? Can this also be broken down per month?

A3. The Trust can confirm that no shifts in the timescale detailed were filled by off-framework agencies.

Q4. Between Oct 23 – Dec 23, what was the trust spend per month, for each agency supplier?

A4. The Trust can only provide the totals overall for each month and the total spend for each agency.

To provide the agency spend per month would be commercially sensitive. To give this level of detail would identify payment structures.

Exemption 43 Commercial Interests

Section 43(2) states that information is exempt if its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the public authority holding it).

In accordance with the FOI Act 2000 the Trust cannot fulfil this part of your request under Section 43 Commercial Interest. The arguments to maintain this exemption outweigh the arguments for disclosure. Its disclosure would be prejudicial to the commercial interest of the agency providers.

Please see Table 3 for the total monthly Trust spend for all agencies.

Table 3

Date	Total Spend
October 2023	£4,388,043.67
November 2023	£6,290,540.16
December 2023	£6,683,995.93