



23 April 2024

Our Ref: RFI 56959

**Freedom of Information Act 2000
Information in Relation to Red Flagged GP Referrals**

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 28 February 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 Medicine, Unscheduled Care and Cancer 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 Officer

Q1a. How many red flagged GP referrals (urgent/emergency) have been down graded from 1st Jan 2023 -28 Feb 2024?

A1a. Please note the Trust can only provide figures up to 8 November 2023 due to migrating to the new Encompass system. The data validation for this system is currently ongoing.

There have been 385 red flagged GP referrals downgraded from 1 January 2023 to 8 November 2023.

Q1b. What was the reason for this?

A1b. The information requested is not held on a central information system. To obtain this information would require a manual review of records.

This would exceed the 'Appropriate Limit' as defined by the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The Trust therefore exempts the release of this information under Section 12(1).

12.(1) Section 1(1) does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 this statement acts as a Refusal Notice in regards to Q1b, Q2b, Q3b and Q4b.

Q1c. Were the patients/GPs consulted?

A1c. Yes, a letter confirming this, is generated on the Patient Administration System (PAS) as part of the downgrade process.

Q2a. How many red flagged GP referrals (urgent/emergency) have been down graded from 1st Jan 2022 -31st Dec 2022?

A2a. There have been 307 red flagged GP referrals downgraded from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022.

Q2b. What was the reason for this?

A2b. The information requested is not held on a central information system, please refer to the response issued to Question 1b.

Q2c. Were the patients/GPs consulted?

A2c. Yes, a letter confirming this, is generated on the PAS as part of the downgrade process.

Q3a. How many red flagged GP referrals (urgent/emergency) have been down graded from 1st Jan 2021 -31st Dec 2021?

A3a. There have been 251 red flagged GP referrals downgraded from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021.

Q3b. What was the reason for this?

A3b. The information requested is not held on a central information system, please refer to the response issued to Question 1b.

Q3c. Were the patients/GPs consulted?

A3c. Yes, a letter confirming this, is generated on the PAS as part of the downgrade process.

Q4a. How many red flagged GP referrals (urgent/emergency) have been down graded from 1st Jan 2020 -31st Dec 2020?

A4a. There have been 211 red flagged GP referrals downgraded from 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020.

Q4b. What was the reason for this?

A4b. The information requested is not held on a central information system, please refer to the response issued to Question 1b.

Q4c. Were the patients/GPs consulted?

A4c. Yes, a letter confirming this, is generated on the PAS as part of the downgrade process.

Q5. Is there a difference between urgent/emergency?

A5. In terms of GP referrals there is no emergency category. Red flag is the highest priority, followed by urgent referral and then the lowest being a routine referral.