

27 June 2024

Our Ref: RFI 58818**Freedom of Information Act 2000
Information in Relation to Interpretation Services**

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 May 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 People & Organisational Development 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

Q1. What was your overall 2021/2022, 2022/2023 & 2023/2024 spend for interpretation and translation services? Apr'21 – Mar'22 Spend to include all service formats across all contracts held.

A1. Face to Face (spoken) Foreign Language Interpreting provision is provided by the Business Services Organisation (BSO) Health and Social Care (HSC) Interpreting Service, commissioned by the Department of Health's Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG) to provide foreign language interpreting services to HSC providers in Northern Ireland.

This provision is in line with Regulation 12 of the Public Contracts Regulations (PCR) 2015, which allows the delivery of Service Level Agreements between Public entities within the Public Sector. BSO is the statutory provider of Face to Face (spoken) Foreign Language Interpreting for all HSC Organisations.

With regard to telephone interpreting, written translation and sign language interpreting - the Department for Communities (DfC) has commissioned a number of contractors to provide interpretation, translation and transcription services to the Northern Ireland (NI) Public Sector. The contract was awarded through tender and runs from 1 February 2022 until 31 January 2026.

The SPPG provide funding for telephone, face-to-face and sign language interpreting across the region. Face-to-face interpreting and sign language interpreting is paid directly by the SPPG.

Please direct any queries regarding spending to SPPG, who have their own dedicated FOI teams who will be able to assist you with your request, they can be contacted at FOI@health-ni.gov.uk.

The SPPG provide funding to Trust each year to cover the cost of telephone interpreting. The Trusts cover the cost of translations, please see Table 1 for the cost of Written Translation Services and Table 2 for Telephone Interpreting Services for the financial years (April to March) 2021/2022, 2022/2023 & 2023/2024.

Table 1

Service	(£) Cost 2021/2022	(£) Cost 2022/2023	(£) Cost 2023/2024
Written Translation	£10,369	£16,318	£17,491
Telephone Interpreting	£26,684	£29,720	£41,271

Please confirm the following details for your provider(s) of interpretation services for each year:

- a) Pre-booked face-to-face**
 - b) Pre-booked video**
 - c) Pre-booked telephone**
 - d) On-demand video**
 - e) On-demand telephone**
 - f) British Sign Language**
 - g) Interpreters on wheels**
- Q2. Scope of contract and value of spend where in scope in Apr'23-Mar'24 year?**
- Q3. Value of spend against each in-scope service - Apr'22-Mar'23 year?**
- Q4. Value of spend against each in-scope service Apr'21-Mar'22 year?**
- Q5. Current contract start date?**
- Q6. Current contract end date?**
- Q7. Any extension options available under the existing contract?**
- Q8. How was this contract awarded?**
- Q9. Which procurement framework was used to award this contract?**
- Q10a. Have service credits been applied in the last 12 months?**
- Q10b. If yes, what performance failure was this linked to?**
- Q11. Is there is an exclusivity clause, which would prevent you from piloting additional or complementary interpreting services during the duration of your current contract?**
- Q12. From which budget within your organisation are interpreting services funded?**
- Q13. Which staff member/job role is responsible for signing off that budget?**

Q14. Which staff member/job role manages the interpretation services contract(s)?

A2-14. In regards to questions 2 to 14 please direct your queries regarding provider(s) of interpretation services to BSO, DfC and/or SPPG. BSO, DfC and SPPG have their own dedicated FOI teams who will be able to assist you with your request, they can be contacted at:

BSO: Foi.bso@hscni.net
DfC: foi@communities-ni.gov.uk
SPPG: FOI@health-ni.gov.uk