

15 August 2024

Our Ref: RFI 59289

**Freedom of Information Act 2000
Information in Relation to Trust Spend with Framework Agencies**

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 11 July 2024. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding to your request. Thank you for your understanding and forbearance.

A response to the questions raised has been provided by the Finance & Estates and People & Organisational Development Services Directorate and is attached in Appendix A.

In relation to the **'spend broken down by each agency'**, within questions 1c, 2c & 3c, I would like to advise you that the Trust has decided not to release the information that is held for the following reasons:

The information in relation to the **'spend broken down by each agency'**, within questions 1c, 2c & 3c is exempt from release under Section 43 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

This is a qualified exemption and so a Public Interest Test was carried out to decide if the information should be released or not. Having weighed up the factors for and against release, it was decided to withhold this information because the disclosure of such information would:

- a) (Section 43) Pose a significant threat to the integrity & operation of the digital systems on which the day-to-day business of the Trust relies

Section 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). Disclosure of the requested information would leave the (name of organisation's) digital infrastructure at significant risk of cyber security attack. This would compromise the Trust ability to provide Health & Care Services and carry-on business-as usual should the digital systems be compromised.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 this letter acts as a Refusal Notice in regards to the information relating to the spend breakdown by agency within questions 1c, 2c & 3c.

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. In the period 1st January 2024 to 30th June 2024 please provide a breakdown of the total trust spend with framework agencies for locum nurses.

A1a. The total Trust spend with on framework nursing agencies (Band 5 and above) from 01/01/2024 to 30/06/2024 is £7,704,000.

Please provide a further breakdown for locum nurses by:

Q1b. Spend per band.

A1b. Please see Table 1 for the spend breakdown by band.

Table 1

Band	Spend (£)
Band 5	£7,660,000
Band 6	£44,000

Q1c. Spend per agency name.

A1c. Please see Table 2 for the list of on contract agencies for locum Nurses.

Table 2

Agency
Allied and Clinical Recruitments
Axis Nursing Agency
BFS Healthcare Ltd
Direct Medics Limited
First Choice Selection Services
Frontline Recruitment Group
Knockdene Healthcare
Leadcare Nursing Agency Ltd
MBands Ltd T/A MB & S Healthcare
Medlocums Recruitment Limited
NC Healthcare Limited
Peninsula Care Services NI Ltd
Plan B Healthcare
Pulsecare Agency T/A Oberon Agency
The Placement Group T/A JustNurses
Total Talen Management

Q2a. In the period 1st January 2024 to 30th June 2024 please provide a breakdown of the total trust spend with off framework agencies for locum nurses.

A2a. The total Trust spend with off framework nursing agencies (Band 5 and above) from 01/01/2024 to 30/06/2024 is £79,000.

Please provide a further breakdown for locum nurses by:

Q2b. Spend per band.

A2b. Please see Table 3 for the spend breakdown by band.

Table 3

Band	Spend (£)
Band 5	£10,000
Band 6	£69,000

Q2c. Spend per agency name.

A2c. Please see Table 4 for the list of off contract agencies for locum Nurses.

Table 4

Agency
Balmoral Healthcare Recruitment
Next Step Nursing Ltd

Q3a. In the period 1st January 2024 to 30th June 2024 please provide a breakdown of the Total trust spend with the internal trust bank or associated external provider for locum nurses.

A3a. The total Trust bank spend for Nurses (Band 5 and above) from 01/01/2024 to 30/06/2024 is £6,858,000.

Please provide a further breakdown for locum nurses by:

Q3b. Spend per band.

A3b. Please see Table 5 for the spend breakdown by band.

Table 5

Band	Spend (£)
Band 5	£4,384,000
Band 6	£1,628,000
Band 7	£724,000
Band 8a	£122,000

Q3c. Spend per agency name

A3c. The Trust total spend is for internal Trust Bank Staff only.

Q4. Please confirm the total number of nursing shifts booked during this period (1st January 2024 to 30th June 2024)

A4. The total number of nursing shifts booked from 01/01/2024 to 30/06/2024 is 43,452.

Q5. Please confirm the total number of nursing shifts booked above NHSE capped rates during this period (1st January 2024 to 30th June 2024)

A5. The capped rates do not apply to Health and Social Care Northern Ireland.