

FOI REF: 24/158a

3rd May 2024

Tel: 0300 131 4500
Website: www.esht.nhs.uk

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

I am responding to your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act. The answers to your specific questions are as follows:

Please can you provide the following information regarding language services:

- 1) **Please confirm your overall spend on interpreting, translation and transcription services for the following financial years:**
 - a) **2021-22**
 - b) **2022-23**

Whilst the Trust holds the information requested, it is applying a Section 43(2) exemption in relation to this part of the request as the release of the information is likely to prejudice its commercial interests.

In applying the exemption consideration has been given to the public interest in enabling scrutiny of public sector decision making and the general public interest in accountability and transparency.

We have concluded that sharing commercials could disadvantage the incumbent supplier against their competitors. The information could provide competitors with the suppliers pricing, which could result in these suppliers obtaining a competitive advantage which could result in the Trust not obtaining best value for money.

In this instance, we consider that the public interest in withholding the information is greater than the public interest in disclosing the information.

Cont.../

- 2) **Who is your incumbent supplier(s) for language services? If you have more than one supplier, which services does each one provide to you?**

Providers	Service
LanguageLine	Video Interpreting On-Demand
SignLive	Non-Spoken On-Demand Services
BSL Link	Non-Spoken Face to Face
DA Languages	Language Face 2 Face
SIS	Language Face 2 Face
Vandu	Language Face 2 Face
Translation Empire/ (TheBigWord from December 2024).	Translation Services

- 3) **If you have a separate British Sign Language/non-spoken supplier, who is this?**

BSL Link Ltd.

- 4) **If you have a separate transcription supplier, who is this?**

Translation Empire/TheBigWord Group Ltd from December 2024.

- 5) **Do you have any in-house interpreters/translators?**

No.

- 6) **When is your current language services contract(s) due to expire, a) without extensions and b) with all possible extensions?**

Sussex Interpreting Services	30th September 2025 - Available extensions (1 x 12 months)
BSL Link for Communication Ltd	31st October 2025 - No extensions
SignLive Limited	20th August 2025 - No extensions
LanguageLine Solutions	31st August 2026 - Available extensions (1 x 24 months)
TheBigWord Group Ltd	7th September 2025 - Available extensions (1 x 12 months)
Vandu Language Services Ltd	5th September 2025 - Available extensions (1 x 12 months)
DA Languages	30th September 2025 - Available extensions (1 x 12 months)

Cont.../

7) Could you please provide the name, phone number and email address of the contract manager responsible for language services?

Amy Pain
Head of Patient Experience

We are unable to provide the contact details of staff as we consider this information to be exempt from release in accordance with section 44 of the Freedom of Information Act (Prohibition on disclosure) and would refer to the Privacy and Electronic Communications EC Directive Regulations 2003 which provide specific rules on electronic communication services, including marketing (by phone, fax, email or text) and keeping communications services secure. We will not provide any information that could result in the transmission of unsolicited communications which may place an unacceptable risk to our email network and could also have a detrimental impact on patient care and treatment.

The contact number for the Trust are accessible on the Trust website <http://www.esht.nhs.uk>.

This is an absolute exemption and there is, therefore, no requirement to consider the public interest.

8) Could you please provide the name, phone number and email address of the person responsible for your language services budget?

Amy Pain
Head of Patient Experience

Section 44 applied as above.

9) Could you please provide the following data for 2023:

a) Total number of face-to-face interpreting assignments (spoken language) and hours completed.

The total number of face-to-face interpreting assignments (spoken language) for 2023 is 344 and 6,231 hours completed.

b) Total number of face-to-face interpreting assignments (non-spoken language) and hours completed.

The total number of face-to-face interpreting assignments (non-spoken language) for 2023 is 174 and 20,880 hours completed.

c) Total number of telephone interpreting calls and minutes completed.

The total number of telephone interpreting calls for 2023 is 2,652 calls and 1,082,759 minutes completed.

- d) Total number of video interpreting calls (spoken language) and minutes completed.**

The total number of video interpreting calls (spoken language) is 749 and 1,082,458 minutes completed.

- e) Total number of video interpreting calls (non-spoken language) and minutes completed.**

Language Line BSL 91 calls and 1,082,415 minutes.

SignLive BSL 278 calls. We do not hold the information in respect of minutes completed for SignLive BSL calls.

- f) Total number of document translations and words translated.**

The total number of document translations is 185 Translations. We do not hold the information in respect of words translated.

- g) Total number of audio transcriptions and total audio duration.**

None.

- 10) What were your top 20 highest-volume languages for interpreting/translation requests in 2023?**

Arabic
Polish
Ukrainian
Romanian
Russian
Turkish
Albanian
Portuguese
Mandarin
Cantonese
Persian/Farsi
Kurdish/Sorani
Bengali
Bangladeshi
Spanish
Vietnamese
Dari/Afghanistan
Bulgarian
Italian
Thai

11) Can you please provide the fill rate % you received for the following services in 2023:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| a) Face-to-face interpreting. | Information Not available. |
| b) Telephone interpreting. | 95% |
| c) Video interpreting. | 95% |
| d) Document translation. | 100% |
| e) Audio transcription. | Not applicable. |

12) What languages has your provider been unable to source in the last 12 months?

Face to Face Interpreters

Pashto
Mandarin
Kurdish Sorani
Malayalam
Bangladesh
Brazilian Portuguese
Portuguese
Vietnamese
Czech
Cantonese
Turkish
Italian
Pashto

13) Have service credits been applied on your language services contract in the last 12 months? If so, what performance failure was this linked to?

None.

14) What social value has been delivered as part of this contract in the last 12 months?

The Trust has a statutory obligation under the Equality Act 2010 to provide access to interpreting services.

Providing high quality interpretation and translation services is an important part of ensuring that patients receive the right care, with informed consent, and have improved health outcomes. This minimises legal risk of misinterpretation of crucial clinical information (for example, informed consent to undergo clinical treatments and procedures) minimising safeguarding risk (for example, for victims of human trafficking).

Cont.../

15) If your contract was awarded through a tender process, can you please provide a copy of the winning bidder's tender?

Whilst the Trust holds the information requested, it is applying a Section 43(2) exemption in relation to this part of the request as the release of the information is likely to prejudice its commercial interests.

In applying the exemption consideration has been given to the public interest in enabling scrutiny of public sector decision making and the general public interest in accountability and transparency.

We have concluded that sharing commercials could disadvantage the incumbent supplier against their competitors. The information could provide competitors with the suppliers pricing, which could result in these suppliers obtaining a competitive advantage which could result in the Trust not obtaining best value for money.

In this instance, we consider that the public interest in withholding the information is greater than the public interest in disclosing the information.

16) What are your contracted rates for each of the following services?

- a) **Spoken face-to-face interpreting: hourly rate.**
- b) **Non-spoken face-to-face interpreting: hourly rate.**
- c) **Telephone interpreting: per minute rate.**
- d) **Spoken video interpreting: per minute rate.**
- e) **Non-spoken video interpreting:**
- f) **Document translation: per word rate.**
- g) **Audio transcription: per audio minute rate.**

Whilst the Trust holds the information requested, it is applying a Section 43(2) exemption in relation to this part of the request as the release of the information is likely to prejudice its commercial interests.

In applying the exemption consideration has been given to the public interest in enabling scrutiny of public sector decision making and the general public interest in accountability and transparency.

We have concluded that sharing commercials could disadvantage the incumbent supplier against their competitors. The information could provide competitors with the suppliers pricing, which could result in these suppliers obtaining a competitive advantage which could result in the Trust not obtaining best value for money.

In this instance, we consider that the public interest in withholding the information is greater than the public interest in disclosing the information.

17) Has your provider of language services increased their charge rate to you in the last 12 months?

All the contracts have been awarded in the last 12 months.

18) What is the Authority's typical route to market?

Framework / Tenders.

19) Does the Authority currently have any interpreter on wheel devices as part of their current contract? If yes please advise how many and if these are provided free of charge or paid for by the Authority.

Yes - 4 X Interpreter on Wheels provided by Language Line.

20) Could you please provide the name, phone number and email address of the person responsible for the language services budget?

Amy Pain
Head of Patient Experience

Section 44 applied, please refer to question 7.

Could you please provide the name, phone number and email address of the person in charge of procurement for the Authority?

Angela Alletson
Head of Procurement

Section 44 applied, please refer to question 7.

If I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Should you be dissatisfied with the Trust's response to your request, you have the right to request an internal review. Please write to the Freedom of Information Department (esh-tr.foi@nhs.net), quoting the above reference, within 40 working days. The Trust is not obliged to accept an internal review after this date.

Should you still be dissatisfied with your FOI request, you have the right of complaint to the Information Commissioner at the following address:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Department
esh-tr.foi@nhs.net