

FOI REF: 24/543

28<sup>th</sup> August 2024

Tel: 0300 131 4500  
Website: [www.esht.nhs.uk](http://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:

- 1) Please provide your category of NHS Trust (acute, mental health etc.) and total staff headcount.**

East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust is an acute hospital and community NHS Trust.

The total staff headcount is 7675 (WTE) as at June 2024.

- 2) How many staff (including temporary staff) died in service as a result of COVID-19, including where COVID-19 was a contributory factor? Please provide the total number for each calendar year –**  
**2020**  
**2021**  
**2022**  
**2023**

Under Section FOIA Section 1 (1) (a) East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust would confirm it does not hold this information.

- 3) How did your organisation communicate their loss to their colleagues? (e.g. in-person meetings, virtual meetings, board or HR briefings)**

Any staff death is communicated to teams and colleagues wherever possible in person. If teams are in different localities and spread over distance, then a virtual meeting would be arranged with planned follow-ups in person. For any staff death we follow a process to ensure the CEO and Trust board are informed.

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- 4) **What support mechanisms were offered to the colleagues of those lost during the pandemic (e.g. individual or group counselling, chaplain/ faith services, external resources)?**

Individual or group counselling, chaplain / faith services and external resources – signposting to external Employee Support Services and recognised support groups.

- 5) **How did your organisation communicate these deaths more widely (e.g. social media, press release/s, other media)?**

With permission from the family a tribute would have been placed in internal staff communications and the above support repeated for anyone impacted or affected by the news.

- 6) **What actions has your organisation taken to commemorate those lost due to COVID-19 (e.g. remembrance day, published obituaries, service or other event)? Please confirm if these actions were taken during or post-(peak)COVID-19 and whether any are ongoing.**

In-house chapel services were open to all and there were also individual remembrance services. These took place during the pandemic. There are no ongoing services or memorials. There was internal communication from the Chief Executive to all staff.

The hospital chapels also have a Memorial Book, which is updated by the chaplaincy team if and when they are requested to include the name of someone new in the book.

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](mailto: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](mailto:esh-tr.foi@nhs.net)