

FOI REF: 24/787

Eastbourne District General Hospital
Kings Drive
Eastbourne
East Sussex
BN21 2UD

28th November 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:

I'd like to obtain information in relation to Trust expenditure on doctor recruitment through external agencies during the 2023/24 financial year and 2024/25 financial year to date (05/11/24), via the Freedom of Information Act 2000:

- 1. How much did the Trust spend on agency locum doctors during the 2023/24 financial year? Can you please provide a breakdown of how much was spent per grade of doctor, specialty of doctor and the number of total hours booked in each specialty**

Section 17 Notice of Refusal

Under Section FOIA Section 1 (1) (a) The Trust would confirm that it does hold 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 information broken down to this level, could disclose the rates that the agencies are charging the Trust. Agencies may use this information to request increased rates to the ESHT and other NHS Trusts, putting supply at risk.

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

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- 2. Can you please name which agencies provided the locum doctors relevant to the answer to my previous question (question 1) and the number of hours each agency provided?**

Section 17 Notice of Refusal

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- 3. How much did the Trust spend on agency fees/costs when recruiting doctors to fixed term or permanent contracts via external agency during each period (i.e. where an introductory fee was charged)? Can you please provide a breakdown of how much was spent per grade of doctor, specialty of doctor and the number of doctors successfully deployed.**

Financial year 2023/24: £615,592

Financial year 2024/25 YTD – April 2024 to October 2024: £114,740

Please note there has been no spend for the period 1st to 5th November.

Section 17 Notice of Refusal on the spend breakdown.

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4. **Can you please name which agencies provided the work/doctors outlined in question 3 and how many doctors each one has successfully provided to the Trust?**

Medacs.

5. **Has the Trust conducted any overseas trips since 2022 to conduct recruitment activities for doctors? If yes, please state how much was spent on each separate visit, which agency was partnered with (if any) and how many doctors were successfully hired (and started in post at the hospital) as a result of each visit.**

No.

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