



**East Sussex Healthcare**  
NHS Trust

Eastbourne District General Hospital

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East Sussex  
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FOI REF: 25/411

25<sup>th</sup> June 2025

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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 detailed within the attached document.

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)

## FOI 25/411 Request details

**Q1:** Please provide details of the location of the laboratory responsible for completing your histology workloads, as well as the ICB and pathology network details for the years indicated.

	2023	2024
NAME OF LABORATORY COMPLETING HISTOPATHOLOGY WORK	Cellular Pathology - East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust	Cellular Pathology - East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust
INTEGRATED CARE BOARD	Sussex ICB	Sussex ICB
PATHOLOGY NETWORK (WHICH NETWORK IS THE HISTOPATHOLOGY LABORATORY PART OF)	South 7	South 7
NATURE OF PATHOLOGY NETWORK (NUMBER OF HISTOLOGY HUB LABORATORIES IN NETWORK)	7	7
NATURE OF PATHOLOGY NETWORK (NUMBER OF ESSENTIAL SERVICES LABORATORIES/SPOKE HISTOPATHOLOGY LABORATORIES IN NETWORK)	Undecided	Undecided

**Q2:** Please provide details of histology workloads (total cases/total slides) for the years indicated. For slides this should be the total volume including special stains and immunohistochemistry.

	2023	2024
TOTAL CASES (WHOLE NUMBER)	31335	33547
TOTAL SLIDES (WHOLE NUMBER)	196154	225833

**Q3:** Please provide details of the histology staffing for the years indicated (full time equivalents). This should only be those staff involved in histology, but may include admin staff (e.g., secretaries) if they play a significant role in the completion of the histology workload. This is divided into two areas (laboratory and support/reporting). This should be a total of staff in post only and should not include unfilled vacancies.

- Laboratory and support (LAB): Those staff involved in the preparation of laboratory samples – including admin and quality support roles – this should include histology secretaries, medical laboratory assistants, biomedical scientists, this should also include any laboratory senior staff/managers in histology.
- Reporting (REP): This should include those staff involved in the preparation of histology reports; this should include pathologists, registrars, clinical scientists, and consultant biomedical scientists.

Where staff numbers have changed through a calendar year (e.g., new staff recruited/staff leaving), please provide an approximate average.

	2023	2024
HISTOLOGY LABORATORY STAFF (WTE)	30.41	27.14
HISTOLOGY REPORTING STAFF (WTE)	8	6.50

**Q4:** Please provide details of the approximate proportion of the histopathology workload outsourced to an external company/laboratory for either laboratory processing and/or reporting,

please provide an approximate % of laboratory work (wet cases/blocks) sent for processing and slides sent for reporting.

	2023	2024
APPROXIMATE % OF HISTOLOGY LABORATORY WORKLOAD OUTSOURCED FOR PROCESSING	20%	8%
APPROXIMATE % OF HISTOLOGY CASES OUTSOURCED FOR REPORTING	56%	61%

**Q5:** Where possible please provide details of any bank/locum staff you used for histopathology laboratory processing and/or reporting. Where staff numbers have changed through the year please provide an approximate average.

**Clarification was sought with regard to your definition of locum, i.e. do you mean agency and confirmation was received as follows:**

Yes, you are correct, locum means agency for this question.

	2023	2024
LOCUM/BANK STAFF USED IN THE LABORATORY FOR HISTOLOGY PROCESSING (WTE)	2.0	1.40
LOCUM/BANK STAFF USED FOR HISTOLOGY REPORTING (WTE)	0	0

**Q6:** Please provide details on the number of Biomedical Scientist advanced practitioners that you had in post in the years indicated to aid with advanced dissection and case reporting. These should be fully qualified staff in post and assisting in these roles. Where possible the response should indicate the WTE proportion of role spent carrying out these roles.

	2023	2024
QUALIFIED BMS ADVANCED PRACTITIONERS CARRYING OUT ADVANCED DISSECTION (DEFINED AS RCPATH CAT D/E SPECIMENS) (WTE)	0	0
QUALIFIED BMS ADVANCED PRACTITIONERS/CONSULTANT BIOMEDICAL SCIENTISTS CARRYING OUT CASE REPORTING (WTE)	0	0

**Q7:** Please provide details of turnaround times (TATs) for histology for the years indicated. There are two response options for each year; average histology TAT in days, and % of cases reported in 10 days.

	2023	2024
AVERAGE HISTOLOGY TAT IN DAYS	13 days	11 days
% OF HISTOLOGY CASES REPORTED IN 10 DAYS	48%	52%

**Q8:** Please provide details on histology budgets for the years indicated, this should be the total budget for delivering histopathology services in the years indicated.

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
<b>HISTOPATHOLOGY BUDGETS</b>	3,797,679	4,566,722

**Q9:** Please provide details on the level of histology laboratory automation for each of the indicated years.

- Embedding should only include details of workload embedded using fully automated systems (examples include the Sakura AutoTEC a120).
- Automated microtomy should only include details of workload sectioned using fully automated methods with no human interaction (examples include the Axlabs AS-410m).

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
<b>PERCENTAGE OF HISTOLOGY WORKLOAD RAPIDLY PROCESSED USING A MICROWAVE BASED TISSUE PROCESSOR (SAME DAY PROCESSING)</b>	0	0
<b>PERCENTAGE OF HISTOLOGY WORKLOAD AUTOMATICALLY EMBEDDED (FULLY AUTOMATED – ZERO HUMAN INVOLVEMENT)</b>	0	0
<b>PERCENTAGE OF HISTOLOGY WORKLOAD SECTIONED USING A FULLY AUTOMATED TISSUE SECTIONER (MICROTOME) – ZERO HUMAN INVOLVEMENT</b>	0	0

**Q10:** Please provide details of the proportion of your histology workload that was reported with the aid of digital pathology or artificial intelligence. This data should be for histology only.

- Digital pathology in this instance refers to the use of digital whole slide images (virtual slides) produced from scanned images of histology slides.
- Artificial Intelligence/Computational Pathology in this instance refers to the use of AI tools on digital whole slide images of histology slides to provide details that may assist with the diagnosis of the case, providing counts of positive cells and/or heat maps etc. highlighting potential areas of diagnostic interest.

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
<b>PERCENTAGE OF HISTOLOGY WORKLOAD REPORTED WITH THE USE OF DIGITAL WHOLE SLIDE IMAGES</b>	<5%	~50%
<b>PERCENTAGE OF DIGITAL HISTOLOGY WORKLOAD (WHOLE SLIDE IMAGES) REPORTED WITH THE AID OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TOOLS (CLINICAL DECISION SUPPORT)/COMPUTATIONAL PATHOLOGY</b>	0	0