

FOI REF: 25/511

15th August 2025

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:

Clarification was sought asking you to clarify the following:

- Do you mean long-term bank or agency, or both?
- And what do you define as long term?

Confirmation was received as follows:

- We mean both bank and agency.
 - Long term refers to 1 year.
1. Please provide the total amount spent on locum Doctors across all departments - for 2025 YTD and 2024

2024	£4,281,057.64
2025 Year To Date	£1,288,664.26
 2. Can you break down the percentage spent on bank/locum Doctor spend on the last year (2024) to the most recent records you have, compared to the year before (2023)?
99.12%.

3. **How many Doctor vacancies do you currently have within the Trust that have been vacant for over 6 months?**

11.

4. **Do you have any cost-saving measures in place? (Cost saving measures in terms of reducing agency locum spend)**

Agency commission caps, reduced total charges. Less requests advertised to agency.

5. **Locum-to-permanent ratio: How many locum doctors are currently employed versus permanent doctor staff, and what is the rationale for using locums instead of permanent?**

62 locums (bank and agency) currently working at the trust long term and 835 permanent doctors - a ratio of 1:13.5.

The Trust only use locums where we have been unable to recruit permanent doctors.

6. **Please share which departments have the highest locum doctor spend due to them not being able to fill hard-to-fill roles, Year To Date.**

East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust does not centrally record the information requested above. To enable the Trust to provide this information would require a manual review of every bank/agency request against a vacancy and then manually review whether that vacancy was/is a hard-to-fill role, which we estimate would take more than 18 hours. We are therefore applying Section 12(1) to this part of your request.

Section 12(1) of the Act allows a public authority to refuse to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of compliance would exceed the 'appropriate limit', as defined by the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 (the Regulations). These state that this cost limit is £450 for public authorities which are not part of central government or the armed forces. The costs are calculated at £25 per hour per person regardless of the rate of pay, which means that the limit will be exceeded if the work involved would exceed 18 hours. The Trust estimates that the cost of complying with this request would significantly exceed the above limit.

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.

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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