

9th April 2026

Eastbourne District General Hospital

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

Further to your recent request for information made under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000, I now set out our answers to your specific questions, and any clarifications sought and provided, as follows:

I am writing to request the following information regarding the time taken between deaths and the signing of Medical Certificate Cause of Death (MCCD) forms by medical examiners at your trust between September 2024 and 2025.

- 1. The number of deaths for which the medical examiner signed the MCCD form within 5 days of the date of death at your trust per month, from September 2024 to December 2025.**
- 2. The number of deaths for which the medical examiner signed the MCCD form more than 5 days after death at your trust per month, from September 2024 to December 2025.**
- 3. For each month, please share the length of the longest delay experienced at the trust that month between date of death and ME signature.**
- 4. For each month, please share the length of the shortest time elapsed between date of death and ME signature.**
- 5. For each month, please share the average (mean) number of days between dates of death and ME signatures of MCCD forms.**

East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust does not centrally record the information as requested above. To enable the Trust to provide this information it would require a manual review of over ten thousand records, which we estimate would take in excess of 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.

I trust this information is helpful in its detail or explanation however, if you are dissatisfied with the response, then you have the right to request an internal review. If you wish to seek an internal review, please write to the Freedom of Information Team at esh-tr.foi@nhs.net quoting the above FOI reference number, within 40 working days. Please note the Trust is not obliged to accept a request for an internal review after this time period.

Yours faithfully

Freedom of Information (FOI) Team
East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust
0300 131 4716
Core Hours of Business: Monday to Friday 9.00am to 4.00pm