

13th May 2026

Eastbourne District General Hospital
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Eastbourne
East Sussex
BN21 2UD

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:

- 1. Please can you provide cost information on outsourced letter transcription for the last 3 years?**

Financial year	Spend
2023/24	£37,974
2024/25	£32,391
2025/26	£22,916

- 2. Please can you provide the number of letters by month not meeting a turnaround time of 7 days for the last 3 years?**

East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust does not centrally record the turnaround time of correspondence. To enable the Trust to provide this information it would require an extensive review and analysis of the system that processes Trust clinical correspondence, and at each stage of the data flow, for a significant data period, 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.

- 3. Please can you provide the annual number of documents in backlog for the last 3 years?**

Section 12 to be applied, please refer to question 2 above.

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