

FOI 3055

20<sup>th</sup> May 2025

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 – INFORMATION REQUEST**

- 1. Number of referrals made by health professionals within your Trust to relevant agencies (e.g., PSNI, social services) regarding individuals suspected of being victims of human trafficking in each of the last 10 years. Please specify the criteria used for making such referrals (while respecting patient confidentiality).**

**Response:**

Prior to October 2019, Southern HSC Trust did not routinely collate data on human trafficking. The data below relates to annual reporting periods between April-March.

The referral source includes health professionals but excludes social care professionals and external agencies.

Referrals in relation to alleged abuse of adults and Human Trafficking are based on the account provided by the adult to the reporter. This determination as to whether an adult is suspected as being subject to Human Trafficking will be considered by the Adult Protection Gateway team in line with the National referral mechanism guidance: adult (Northern Ireland and Scotland) 2024.

	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
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No. of Referrals	<5	0	<5	<5	0	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
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The Trust has a legal duty to protect patient confidentiality and, in line with this duty, the figure <5 has been provided where figures are very low. This is because of the potential risk of identification of an individual. In reaching this decision the Trust has taken into account the small geographical area which the Trust serves and the sensitivity of the information requested. In addition, the Trust has taken into account the fact that all information disclosed in response to an FOI is disclosed to the 'world at large' and is published on the Trust website.

S 40 (2) (third party information) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 has been applied to exempt the exact figures from disclosure. The Trust does not consider the disclosure of the information to be fair to the individuals concerned as there is the potential risk of identification of an individual(s) which they would

not expect, and which would therefore breach the fairness element of the first principle of the Data Protection Act 2018

**Children & Young Persons Response:**  
Nil

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