

FOI 3125

16<sup>th</sup> June 2025**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 – INFORMATION REQUEST**

---

**Q1. Does your trust or health board treat giant cell arteritis (GCA)? If not, please provide the name of the hospital or trust that you refer GCA patients to.**

**Response:**

Yes

**Q2. In the past 3 months, how many patients with a primary diagnosis of GCA (ICD10 codes M31.5 or M31.6) were:**

- Admitted as an inpatient
- Treated in A&E

**Response:**

Please see attachment 1.

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

**Q3. How many patients were treated by the rheumatology department in the past 3 months with the following:**

**Response:**

**CURRENT PATIENTS**

- |   |    |
|---|----|
| • Tocilizumab – for any disease -                   | 63 |
| • Tocilizumab for rheumatoid arthritis (RA) only -  | 40 |
| • Tocilizumab for giant cell arteritis (GCA) only - | 21 |

**Q4. How many patients were treated by the ophthalmology department (for any disease) in the past 3 months with Tocilizumab?**

**Response:**

Ophthalmology service is a regional service by Belfast Health & Social Care Trust. You can contact them at:

Public Liaison  
Belfast HSC Trust  
1st Floor, Nore Villa  
Knockbracken Healthcare Park  
Belfast  
BT8 8BH

Email: [publicliaison@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:publicliaison@belfasttrust.hscni.net)

**Q5. How many patients were treated in A&E in the past 3 months for giant cell arteritis (GCA) with Tocilizumab?**

**Response:**

This information is not centrally recorded by the Emergency Department, and due to this a manual search of records would have to be undertaken. Unfortunately, we are unable to provide this information as the cost of locating and retrieving the information exceeds the "appropriate limit" as stated in the Freedom of Information (Fees and Appropriate Limit) Regulations 2004. It has been estimated that it would take more than 18 hours to locate and retrieve the requested information. In order, to obtain this information it would exceed the £450 limit and is therefore cost prohibitive. Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Public Authorities are not obliged to comply with an information request where to do so would exceed the cost limit.

In addition, it would not be appropriate to search through individual patient records for the purposes for responding to a FOI request, there would be no patient expectation that medical records would be used in this way.

Email: [foi.team@southerntrust.hscni.net](mailto:foi.team@southerntrust.hscni.net)