

FOI 3135

26th June 2025

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 – INFORMATION REQUEST

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act concerning waiting times for physiotherapy services provided by the Southern Trust. Specifically, I would like to obtain data comparing the waiting times for adult physiotherapy services for individuals who have transitioned from children to adult services.

For the purpose of this request, I would appreciate it if you could provide the following information:

1. For people who have transitioned from adult to children's service from 2020-2024 what is the average waiting time for NHS adult physiotherapy services. Please supply an annual breakdown.

Response:

The Mental Health and Disability Directorate are unable to extract information from Directorate information systems to breakdown and provide an annual average waiting time for Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy for people who have transitioned from children's to adult services.

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.

Unfortunately we are unable to provide the information you have requested 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 which would involve a manual exercise. To obtain this information would exceed the £450 limit and is therefore cost prohibitive.

2. What is the average waiting time for NHS physiotherapy services for patients aged under 18 for the same 5 year period. Please supply an annual breakdown.

Response:

<u>AVERAGE CHILD WAITS IN DAYS</u>						
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	

Physiotherapy	163	149	141	135	141	
Occupational Therapy	241	258	269	286	372	

3. Any relevant statistics or reports that highlight differences in waiting times between these two age groups, including any factors that may contribute to these differences.

Response:

In June 2023, NCEPOD published 'The Inbetweeners' review aimed at identifying the barriers and facilitators in the process of the transition of children and young people with complex chronic health conditions into adult health services. The paper outlined the need for developmentally appropriate healthcare and adequate resources to be made available to support this process.

In response to this report (June 2024), the Southern Health and Social Care Trust developed an Oversight Forum for Transitional Care for Young People to progress the implementation of the recommendations of the NCEPOD review. The workstreams developed include, but are not exclusive to Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy.

Additionally, the Mental Health and Disability Directorate are involved in regional work being undertaken by the Department of Health to develop a Transition Protocol for Children and Young People with a Learning Disability, including Children and Young People with a Learning Disability and Co-occurring Autism.

4. Information on the capacity and resources allocated to adult vs. paediatric physiotherapy services.

Response:

Within the Mental Health and Disability Directorate there are 16 Physiotherapists working across the totality of Community Disability Services.

Paediatric Physiotherapy staffing (CYP)

Band	3	4	5	6	7	8a	Total
wte	1.2	1.0	1.0	5.6	12.95	1.8	23.55

Paediatric Occupational Therapy staffing (CYP)

Band	3	5	6	7	8a	Total
wte	0.6	2.5	17.17	20.41	3.0	43.68

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