

FOI 3147

17th June 2025**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 – INFORMATION REQUEST**

Does your Trust have, or has it ever had, any policy, standard practice, or internal guidance for classifying records created during post-adoption counselling or support involving non-adopted siblings of adopted persons as “applicant for adoption” records?

Response:

Yes

The Southern Trust have a Records Management Policy which was updated in 2021 to include “Good Management Good Records” DOH Guidance. ‘Good Management, Good Records; Guidelines for managing records in Health and Personal Social Services organisations in Northern Ireland’, (Jan 2021) is the Department’s advice and guidance on records management. It includes a retention and disposal schedule, prepared in accordance with the Public Records Act (NI) 1923 and the Disposal of Documents Order 1925. It covers all records created by the Department, Public Safety and HSC Organisations, as well as those working under contract to the HSC.

Use the search link below to search for a records retention and disposal action.

Retention and disposal as per the Good Management Good records recommends Post adoption counselling - case records for children/adults who have been adopted and other children/adults affected by adoption are retained for 75 years after creation.

If yes, please provide:**Response:**

Copies of the relevant policy or internal documentation attached:

Southern Health and Social Care Trust Records management Policy (Attachment 1)

Southern Health and Social Care Trust Retention and Disposal schedule (Attachment 2)

The legal or procedural basis used to justify this classification (e.g. any references to legislation, GMGR schedules, or case law);**Response:**

Relevant legislation The Adoption Agencies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1989 Reg.14.

‘Good Management, Good Records; Guidelines for managing records in Health and Personal Social Services organisations in Northern Ireland’, (Jan 2021)

The date from which this classification has been applied.

Response:

January 2021.

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