

FOI 3368

31st October 2025**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 – INFORMATION REQUEST**

For each of the financial years listed below, please provide:

Any targets set by your Trust to reduce the number of protracted waits (6 hours or more) experienced by patients who met the criteria for detention for assessment under the Mental Health (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 and required admission to inpatient mental health beds.

Details of any relevant service improvement initiatives, service reconfigurations, or investments made by your Trust under the Mental Health Action Plan which were specifically aligned to reducing the number of such protracted waits.

- **2019/20**
- **2020/21**
- **2021/22**
- **2022/23**
- **2023/24**
- **2024/25**

Response:

There are no set targets

Improvement initiatives

In January/February 2023, dedicated Inpatient Consultants were introduced to Bluestone and Inreach by Home Treatment was increased to cover 7 days, allowing more opportunity to facilitate early discharge. The Southern Trust Acute Care Pathway was launched in January 2024, as a service improvement initiative, aimed at treating patients in the least restrictive environment, with a focus on Home Treatment as an alternative to Inpatient care. Additionally work was carried out to support high users of Inpatient Care, successfully reducing the number of repeat admissions by half.

In October 2024 until June 2025, Southern Trust experienced pressure on beds resulting in patients not being able to access a bed in a timely manner. Prior to this date, there were no protracted waits for admission, due to bed availability.

In response daily huddles were set up with Bed Managers, Integrated Liaison, Home Treatment Crisis Response, Inreach and on call managers in attendance, to look at creating capacity and also planning for out of hours periods. During this time, all available contingency beds were utilised.

Weekly delayed discharge meetings have been a standing arrangement within Southern Trust. These are attended by Community teams, discharge coordinators and inpatient MDT, with a focus on reducing delays in discharge.

All of the above have been put in place by the Southern Trust to avoid/reduce the number of protracted waits (6 hours or more) experienced by patients who met the criteria for detention for assessment under the Mental Health (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 and required admission to inpatient mental health beds.

Email: Foi.Team@Southerntrust.hscni.net