

FOI 3422

17<sup>th</sup> November 2025

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

- For each calendar year from 2015 to 2025, the number of incidents recorded where a patient absconded or escaped from Rosebrook Ward (PICU), Bluestone Unit, Craigavon Area Hospital.**

**Response:**

Please see below data for question 1 & 2

	<b>COLUMN A</b>	<b>COLUMN B</b>
<b>Year (Reported date)</b>	<b>Total No. of incidents recorded where a patient absconded from Rosebrook Ward (PICU)</b>	<b>Of the number stated in COLUMN A, the no. of those patients who were detained under the Mental Health (NI) Order 1986 or equivalent legislation at the time.</b>
2015	17	17
2016	7	7
2017	8	8
2018	<5	<5
2019	16	13
2020	8	8
2021	11	11
2022	11	11
2023	<5	<5
2024	10	10
2025 (up to 27/10/2025)	12	12

Patients who fail to return from accompanied or unaccompanied leave (Article 15, Mental Health Order) at an agreed time are accounted for within this data set. Data therefore does not relate to all patients who abscond from the ward environment. It is not possible to disaggregate this data further.

Within Acute Mental Health settings, the granting of leave under the Mental Health Order plays a vital role in recovery promotion, autonomy and social reintegration, leave is not a privilege, but a multi-disciplinary prescribed risk assessed intervention ground in positive risk taking and recovery focused decision making. It allows for a gradual reconnection with a person's community, rebuilds confidence and practice taught coping strategies in a real-life environment. This stepped exposure helps with the assessment for discharge readiness and supports self-efficacy development and independence, crucial in personal recovery. Positive risk taking recognises that complete risk avoidance hinders recovery, whereas engaging with it encourages a person-centred balanced approach where potential benefits outweigh manageable risks, with safeguarding alongside considered and relevant care planning in place.

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

- 2. For each incident, please state whether the patient was detained under the Mental Health (NI) Order 1986 or equivalent legislation at the time (Yes/No).**

**Aggregate data is sufficient — I do not require any personal or identifiable information.**

**Response:**

Please see table for response to question 1.

- 3. Please include the definition of “abscond” or “escape” used in the Trust’s incident reporting system for the period requested.**

**Response:**

Coding used;

Missing Patient (absconded patient)

\*Escapee is not a used terminology/code

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