

FOI 3439

27<sup>th</sup> November 2025

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

**We are seeking up-to-date information regarding HSC waiting lists for orthopaedic and rheumatology services within the Southern Trust, as follows:**

**Question 1: Inpatient and Day Case Waiting Lists**

**The number of people currently on the waiting list for orthopaedic and rheumatology surgery (Inpatient or Day Case) within the Southern Trust.**

- We would appreciate figures for the last four quarters i.e. April to June 2025; January to March 2025; October to December 2024 and July to September 2024**

**Response:**

For Rheumatology our patients moved to outpatient with procedure and we do not have rheumatology surgery in the Southern Trust.

Orthopaedics, Surgical Admit Waiting List = 3460 patients

April – June 25 = 196 patients added to waiting list

Jan – March 25 = 204 patients added to waiting list

Oct – Dec 24 = 312 patients added to waiting list

July – Sep 24 = 222 patients added to waiting list

**Question 2: Outpatient Waiting Lists**

**The number of people currently waiting for a first outpatient appointment with a consultant relating to orthopaedics and rheumatology within the Southern Trust.**

- Please provide figures for the last four quarters i.e. April to June 2025; January to March 2025; October to December 2024 and July to September 2024.**

**Response:**

Rheumatology

<b>Date Range</b>	<b>Number of Patients on New WL</b>
<b>April – June 2025</b>	3102
<b>January – March 2025</b>	2943
<b>October – December 2024</b>	2712
<b>July – September 2024</b>	3102

Orthopaedics = 14, 435 on New Outpatient Waiting List

April – June 25 = 2323 added

Jan – March 25 = 1881 added  
 Oct – Dec 24 = 1132 added  
 July – Sep 24 = 729 added

**Question 3: Diagnostics Related to Orthopaedics and Rheumatology**  
**The number of patients currently waiting for diagnostic tests (including imaging) related to orthopaedic and rheumatoid conditions within the Southern Trust, covering the last three quarters i.e. April to June 2025; January to March 2025; October to December 2024 and July to September 2024.**

**Response:**

Orthopaedics  
 Imaging

Row Labels	Grand Total
<b>2024</b>	
<b>Qtr3</b>	
Jul	17
Aug	13
Sep	26
<b>Qtr4</b>	
Oct	31
Nov	32
Dec	30
<b>2025</b>	
<b>Qtr1</b>	
Jan	52
Feb	35
Mar	74
<b>Qtr2</b>	
Apr	92
May	50
Jun	106
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>558</b>

Rheumatology

Row Labels	Grand Total
<b>2024</b>	
<b>Qtr3</b>	
Jul	20
Aug	30
Sep	30
<b>Qtr4</b>	
Oct	26

Nov	28
Dec	18
<b>2025</b>	
<b>Qtr1</b>	
Jan	27
Feb	19
Mar	52
<b>Qtr2</b>	
Apr	53
May	62
Jun	92
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>457</b>

#### **Question 4: Demographics of Waiting Lists**

The most recent data from the last four quarters ie April to June 2025; January to March 2025; October to December 2024 and July to September 2024 on the longest waiting lists across the Southern Trust, specifically:

- a. The number of patients waiting longer than four years for treatment of arthritis and rheumatoid conditions.
- b. Please provide a demographic breakdown of the patients, including age, gender and ethnicity.

#### **Response:**

We cannot breakdown the information by condition for patients on the waiting list.

This information is not recorded centrally and therefore retrieving it would involve a manual search of individual patient records. As such we cannot 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. In order to obtain this information from a number of individual patient records 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.

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