

FOI 3664

12 May 2026

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 – INFORMATION REQUEST

I am writing to seek information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 regarding the Southern Trust's internal homecare (Domiciliary care) service: -

1. Workforce & Hours

The current number of staff (headcount and whole-time equivalent) employed within the internal domiciliary care service, broken down by role (e.g. care staff, supervisors, managers).

Response:

Role	Headcount	WTE
Health Care Assistants	1052	330.18
Home Care Supervisors	62	35.40
Admin ¹	89	54.22
Managers ²	8	7.59

¹ includes Monitoring Officers

² includes Out of Hours Managers and Monitoring Manager

The total number of domiciliary care hours delivered by the internal service in each of the last 12 months (or the last 12 months for which data is available).

Response:

Month	Hours delivered by Trust Home Care
Jan 25	106564
Feb 25	95923
Mar 25	103695
Apr 25	99030
May 25	103028
June 25	99063
July 25	101246
Aug 25	101512
Sept 25	97592
Oct 25	97809

Nov 25	92962
Dec 25	93447

NB: The SHCST implemented a new electronic Live monitoring system in December 2024 and by December 2025 we had implemented the electronic system across two of our three registered offices. The information included above is for all three offices.

2. Service Performance

The number of missed or unfulfilled calls recorded by the internal service in the last 12 months (or for the most recent 12-month period available).

Response:

From January 2025 to December 2025 there were 550 missed calls.

NEW ADDITIONAL QUESTION RE MISSED CALLS	
Total number of calls delivered	2,529,458
Percentage of calls missed	0.02%
Operational definition of a missed call: a missed call is where the episode of care has not taken place as scheduled.	

The number of complaints received in relation to the internal service in the last 12 months.

Response:

From January 2025 to December 2025 there were eight complaints.

NEW ADDITIONAL QUESTION RE COMPLAINTS	
Complaint outcomes (upheld or otherwise)	Not available as information is not recorded in this manner.
Complaints rate relative to activity.	Not available, as information is not recorded in this manner.

3. Workforce Stability

Staff attrition and turnover rates within the internal service for the last 12 months (or most recent 12-month period available).

Response:

The table below show the Turnover in Trust Home Care based on the rolling year period January 2025 to December 2025. The table shows the % Turnover of Permanent Staff within Trust Home Care Services broken down by Trust Care Assistants and overall as at 31 December 2025

NB: Turnover figures are based on a headcount and Leavers from the Trust, they do not include Internal Transfers.

Personnel Area	% Turnover
Trust Care Assistants	20.01%
Overall Total	19.70%

NEW ADDITIONAL QUESTION RE WORKFORCE TURNOVER	
Provide: Full attrition data including leavers, starters and	The data provided above under the heading "Turnover" represents both attrition and turnover figures, which are not differentiated in our service.
Vacancy levels	The service does not have a set staffing level as the level of staff is variable in response to demand, therefore there is not an identified vacancy level available.

A breakdown of the contract types used for internal domiciliary care staff (percentage on zero hours, part-time, full-time, bank, or agency).

Response:

Trust Home Care offers a full range of contract types 12hr, 16hr, 20hr, 25hr, 30hr, 32hr, 33hr and fulltime 37.5hrs and also zero hours.

52% of Trust Home Care staff are contracted 48% have zero hours contract.

REQUEST FOR FURTHER CLARIFICATION	
Type of Contract	Percentage of each type
Zero Hours	48%
Part Time	52%
Full Time	0%
Bank	0%
Agency	0%

The Trust is currently working through a process of moving all Trust Home Care Assistants on to contracted hours, including those who are currently employed on 'Variable Hours' or zero-hours basis. Currently, for those staff who are recorded on the Trust's payroll system with contracted hours (52% of all Trust Home Care Assistants) all of these staff have contracted hours, which are considered part-time (defined as less than 37.5 hours per week).

The number of shifts covered by agency staff within the internal service in the last 12 months.

Response:

From January 2025 to December 2025 the number of shifts covered by Agency was Zero.

4. Sickness and Cover Costs ○ The number of sickness absence days recorded within the internal service in the last 12 months. ○ The direct salary costs of sickness absence, and the additional cost incurred in covering those absences (including agency or overtime)

Response:

The below table has the Estimated Total Absence Costs including Occupational and Statutory Sick Pay costs and Employer National Insurance and Pension Contributions per employee from January 2025 to December 2025.

Staff Group	Calendar days Lost	Estimated Absence Cost
Trust Home Care Assistants	37,111	£2,244,712
Other staff in Trust Home Care	4,226	£326,253
Overall Total	41,337	£2,570,966

REQUEST FOR FURTHER CLARIFICATION RE ADDITIONAL COSTS COVERING ABSENCE
Please provide the additional costs incurred in covering absence, including overtime or replacement staffing.
It is not possible to separate the direct costs of covering sickness absences, however the cost of overtime within the Trust Home Care Assistants with the January 2025 to December 2025 is £2,887,411.

5. Costing & Efficiency: Please provide the Trust's estimated cost per hour of delivery for the internal domiciliary care service, broken down as follows:

Response:

Carer costs: all employment costs per hour including base pay, holiday, travel, sickness, pensions, national insurance.

The current cost of a full time Domiciliary Care Workers is as detailed in the table below:

Pay Band	Pay Point	Payroll Cost (incl. NI, employer and pension costs)	Hourly Cost
Band 2	All	£32,363	£16.55
Band 3	Entry	£32,636	£16.69
Band 3	Top	£34,860	£17.83

The above costs include Employer and pension contributions.

Payment for Unsocial Hours is made in accordance with Section 2 (*Maintaining round the clock services*) of the Agenda for Change Terms and Conditions of Service Handbook. The rates are set out in the table below:

Pay Band	All time Saturday (midnight to midnight) and any weekday after 8pm and before 6am	All time on Sundays and Public Holidays (midnight to midnight)
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Band 2	Time plus 41%	Time plus 83%
Band 3	Time plus 35%	Time plus 69%

Home care staff are to paid travel on the basis of mileage claims; mileage is then paid In line with Agenda for Change circular references:

For AFC the primary rate is 58 pence per mile, while the secondary rate is 30 pence per mile. The primary rate (of 58 pence per mile) is paid for the first 4500 miles and the secondary rate (of 30 pence per mile) should be paid thereafter. Public transport rates are 30 pence per mile, as advised by the Department of Health.

Sickness is paid on the basis of the Working Time Directive (WTD) and is based on the average hours worked by employee over a 13-week period.

- **Supervision and management allocation: per hour cost of operations, HR, compliance, audit, governance, finance, rostering/co-ordination, and recruitment functions**
- **Office and overhead allocation: per hour allocation for facilities, IT, vehicles, uniforms, and other indirect costs.**
- **Senior management and director allocation: per hour cost share of senior management and director-level staff supporting the internal service**
- **Any other cost categories used internally when calculating the full economic cost per hour of the Trust's internal service**

Response:

See below table taken from Patient Level Information Costing System (PLICS) showing the estimated (currently being reviewed) 24/25 fully absorbed unit cost for Homecare Statutory: *Please note the below reference period is for the 24/25 period.*

	Unit cost
DIRECTOR ALLOCATION	£0.16
GOODS & SERVICES	£2.61
IT	£0.40
OVERHEAD	£1.59
RUNNING COSTS	£3.24
STAFFING	£31.75
Total Unit Cost	£39.74

REQUEST FOR FURTHER CLARIFICATION RE FULLY ABSORBED COSTS PER HOUR

Cost per hour of delivery – Please supply the Trust's current fully absorbed cost per delivered hour including staffing, management, governance, overhead, and corporate allocations.

In responding to this FOI request the Trust has provided the “Absorbed Costs” derived from PLICS (Patient Level Information and Costing System) for Trust Home Care. This cannot be compared to Independent Sector home care tariffs.

At this point the Trust estimates that the direct cost of Trust provided Home Care in 24/25 was significantly less than the Absorbed cost quoted above. Although still higher than the ISP regional tariff, we believe that the Trust’s employer pension costs and paid travel rates are higher than those of ISP employers, reflecting more generous Trust terms of employment. NB: In addition, it should be noted that the Trust does incur “on-costs” in respect of managing our relationship with ISPs of Home Care, in terms of the staffing and on costs associated with the operation of Care Bureau to match Trust requests against ISP Home Care availability, as well as validating the invoices in preparation for payment of work delivered.

REQUEST FOR FURTHER CLARIFICATION RE MANAGEMENT AND OVERHEAD ALLOCATIONS

Management and overhead allocations – The 2023/24 costing table does not answer the question for the current period. Please supply the current cost structure used internally.

There is not a more up to date position available currently.

Recruitment costs – how many recruitment exercises run in the last 12 months – the cost of running these and the success rate of each exercise i.e. number of applicants and number appointed.

Response:

There were 17 recruitment exercises:

- 14 for Home care assistants bands 2 & 3 with 403 applicants and 54 final offers issued.
- 3 for Homecare supervisor, Homecare locality manager & Homecare Administrative officer with 61 applicants and 9 final offers issued.

REQUEST FOR FURTHER CLARIFICATION RE RECRUITMENT

Recruitment exercises – Please provide recruitment costs and a clear success rate summary.

The Trust’s recruitment service is provided by an outsourced provider (Business Services Organisation) under an overarching Service Level Agreement. Individual recruitment exercises are not costed.

The initial response provided detail on the number of applications received and the number of final offers made for each recruitment exercise, as a measure of the success rate. This will not reflect the number of appointees who actually commenced as some candidates withdraw after final offer for many reasons – this information is not captured against each exercise so is not available without significant work.

6. Comparative Data

Please confirm whether the Trust has undertaken any benchmarking or comparative cost analysis between its internal service and the independent sector in the last 3 years. If so, please provide copies of those reports

Response:

The Trust input to a PLICS data/regional costing exercise lead by Strategic Performance and Planning Group (SPPG), however this was for FY23/24 and FY 22/23. A copy of this document can be requested by contacting SPPG 028 95 363893.

REQUEST FOR CLARITY RE BENCHMARKING INFORMATION
Benchmarking reports – Please provide copies of benchmarking documents held by the Trust or issue a formal refusal citing the relevant FOI exemption.
The Trust has not undertaken any benchmarking or comparative cost analysis between its internal service and the Independent Sector in the last 3 years. Therefore, the Trust does not hold any such information that it can issue.

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