

FOI 3814

18th June 2026

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 – INFORMATION REQUEST

Question:

The number of reported incidents of inappropriate, unauthorized or otherwise improper access to patient, service user or staff records within the Trust from January 1 2023 until June 1 2026

Response

There were 15 incidences of confirmed inappropriate access between 1st January 2023 and 1st June 2026 as recorded on the Trust Data Incident Register, based on the reports from the Adverse Incident Management System.

Question:

The above data broken down by year, and where recorded, by system involved e.g. Encompass and other electronic systems

Response:

Financial Year	Number of Incidents
2022 - 2023	<5*
2023 -2024	<5*
2024 -2025	7
2025 -2026	<5*

<5 of these incidents were related to inappropriate access involving encompass.

Although the Southern Trust understands that there is a public interest in being open and transparent, the information including system names is business sensitive and has the potential to leave the Trust vulnerable to cyber-attacks. By disclosing these details, this information could prejudice and compromise the Trust's network/IT security.

In accordance with Section 31 (1) (a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 - Law enforcement – the prevention or detection of crime, such information is exempt from disclosure.

We believe that putting this information into the public domain would make the Trust more vulnerable to cyber-attacks. The public interest in maintaining the security of our systems and providing safe health and social care to our patients/clients outweighs the public interest in disclosure of this information.

Question:

The number of incidents of the above nature that have led to disciplinary action and what the outcomes were

Response:

The number of staff disciplined in relation to inappropriate access to patient records.

Financial Year	Number of Staff / Cases
2022 – 2023	<5*
2023 – 2024	<5*
2024 – 2025	5
2025 - 2026	<5*
2026 – Present	0

The categories of disciplinary action taken (for example: warning, suspension, dismissal).

Financial Year	Number of Staff / Cases	No Action	Informal Action	Formal Warning	Final Written Warning	Dismissal
2022 – 2023	<5*	0	0	0	0	<5*
2023 – 2024	<5*	0	<5*	0	0	0
2024 – 2025	5	0	<5*	<5*	<5*	<5*
2025 - 2026	<5*	0	0	0	<5*	0
2026 – Present	0					

* 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 redacted information from disclosure. The Trust does not consider the disclosure of the redacted 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.

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