

FOI 1609

09/05/2023

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 – INFORMATION REQUEST

Question 1. How many abortions/terminations of pregnancy have been performed in the Trust since October 2019?

Please refer to DHSSPS Termination-Pregnancy Hospital Activity Annual Statistic Publications [Termination of pregnancy | Department of Health \(health-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/termination-of-pregnancy)

There have been 920 Early Medical Abortions completed up to 9+6 weeks gestation from Oct 2019 to Feb 2023.

Question 2. How many abortions/terminations of pregnancy have been performed before the gestation of 10 weeks and 6 days? Please give a breakdown by method of termination and location.

Acute Information Team unable to provide above data on gestation, method of termination and location.

Question 3. How many abortions/terminations of pregnancy have been performed after the gestation of 10 weeks and 6 days? Please give a breakdown by method of termination, trimester/stage of pregnancy and location.

Acute Information Team unable to provide above data on gestation, method of termination and location.

Question 4. Are reasons recorded as to why the abortion/termination of pregnancy is being sought?

This information is not recorded

Question 5. What are the reasons recorded for the abortions/terminations of pregnancy performed?

This information is not recorded

Question 6. What demographic data is being collected on the women requesting abortion/termination of pregnancy, for the purposes of informing service delivery and future policy development? Please provide this data.

This information is not recorded

Question 7. What demographic data is being collected on the embryo/foetus being aborted, for the purposes of informing service delivery and future policy development? Please provide this data.

This information is not recorded

Question 8. In circumstances of a maternal diagnosis of a medical/health condition where abortion/termination of pregnancy may be offered, what is the protocol in the Trust regarding available options and pathways of care; in pregnancy, during and post birth and pre and post abortion/termination of pregnancy?

Any woman who has a medical or health related condition and requests a termination of pregnancy up to 12 weeks gestation of pregnancy is referred to the British Pregnancy Association (BPAS) for signposting and relevant support. If booked for maternity care in the SHSCT each individual request is reviewed by 2 separate doctors at consultant level and the woman is counselled outlining options and potential support. Depending on gestational age an individualised care plan is devised. Each woman is signposted to BPAS for post procedure counselling.

Question 9. In circumstances of a foetal diagnosis of a medical/health condition where abortion/termination of pregnancy may be offered, what is the protocol in the Trust regarding available options and pathways of care; pre-birth, during and post birth and pre and post abortion/termination of pregnancy?

Any Woman booked for maternity care in the SHSCT where a life limiting fetal diagnosis is suspected is initially reviewed by 2 separate doctors at consultant level with a fetal medicine interest within the SHSCT. Then the Woman is referred to the regional Fetal Medicine service based at the RJMS in Belfast for a second opinion. Depending on outcome the Woman is counselled outlining options and potential support. Depending on gestational age an individualised care plan is devised. Each woman is signposted to BPAS for post procedure counselling.

Question 10. How many abortions have included the procedure whereby the life of the foetus is ended, using potassium chloride or some other chemical, before labour is induced?

There is not a feticide service in the Southern Trust, Women are refer to the regional centre or to the UK. We do not keep data on the numbers referred.

Question 11. Is it the policy of the Trust to administer pain relief to the foetus before such procedures as outlined above, and including evacuation/Dilation and Extraction are performed?

N/A

Question 12. What is the protocol in the Trust if a foetus is delivered/induced/born alive following an attempted abortion/termination of pregnancy/induction?

A discussion is had with any Woman who requests a termination of pregnancy as to what to expect. Feticide is offered to all Women who fit the criteria for it. Any Fetus/Baby born is treated with respect and dignity within the Hospital setting.

Question 13. What is the protocol in the Trust for the disposal of embryo/foetal remains post abortion/termination of pregnancy? Please give a breakdown by stage of gestation.

All products of conception/fetal remains are disposed of adhering to the Human Tissue Act (2004)
www.hta.gov.uk

Question 14. What is the protocol in the Trust regarding parental involvement in how the embryo/foetal remains are disposed of? Please give a breakdown by stage of gestation.

Written consent is obtained from all parents regarding how products of conception are disposed of, as above link.

Question 15. How many staff have raised a conscientious objection to taking part in abortion/termination of pregnancy procedures?

There are 74 members of staff who have registered a conscientious objection.

Question 16. Is there any policy, written correspondence, minutes or guidance about the recruitment, promotion or participation of staff to any position who raise or register a conscientious objection to taking part in abortion/termination of pregnancy?

This is not addressed specifically within a policy document, attached is current form for raising a conscientious objection

Attachment 1 – 24/08/2022 – SHSCT Register Form for Conscientious Objection for Early Medical Abortion Services



2022 08 24 SHSCT
Register for Conscie

Question 17. Has a conscientious objection to taking part in abortion/termination of pregnancy formed part of any complaints or disciplinary proceedings against any member of staff since 2019?

No.

Question 18. Is there any policy, written correspondence, minutes or guidance about the pastoral care available for staff who may be negatively impacted by abortion/termination of pregnancy?

The trust offer a range of support services via the Trust website, these can be accessed by any member of the Team.

Question 19. Please disclose any correspondence from (and response to) any individual or organisation who has contacted the Trust about the issue of abortion/termination of pregnancy and conscientious objection since 2019.

Since November 2021 I have received 1 FOI request relating to termination of pregnancy. There are no further details retained centrally prior to this date. As outlined above 74 staff have notified a conscientious objection

Question 20. Please disclose all policies, procedures, guidance and all other documentation issued to or by the Trust and relating to abortion/termination of pregnancy since 2019.



SOP EMA
Assessment V2.Doc



SOP EMA BPAS
Referrals.doc



SOP EMA Certificate
of Opinion.doc



SOP EMA Treatment
V2.doc

Attachment 2 – SOP EMA Assessment V2

Attachment 3 – SOP EMA BPAS Referrals

Attachment 4 – SOP EMA Certificate of Opinion

Attachment 5 – SOP EMA Treatment V2

Email: Foi.Team@Southerntrust.hscni.net