

FOI 1778

04/09/2023

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 – INFORMATION REQUEST

Your request for information regarding a report commissioned from the Nuffield Trust has now been considered and unfortunately cannot be provided at this time.

We have considered your request and believe this information is exempt from disclosure under section 22 of Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Section 22 is a qualified exemption subject to a public interest test. We have considered the public interest in releasing the information that falls under section 22 against the interest in withholding it:

Public Interest Test – release of information relating to the Nuffield Trust Review

Applicable Exemption	<i>Section 22 – information intended for future publication.</i>
Harm	The provision of the 2023 Nuffield report in itself has little potential for harm as it is a factual review of services as observed by the visiting review team. The timing of release of the report is of key importance in this situation. It is necessary that there is comprehensive internal engagement with clinical and managerial staff allowing for discussion of the facts and findings of the report and how these are applicable to individuals and to their service(s).
Factors Favours disclosure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The public are entitled to know how public funds are spent and how resources are used within Health & Social Care. • By providing a copy of the report this would provide transparency on external scrutiny activities that have taken place. • This information contained in the report could also be used to share with other healthcare providers for them to also strengthen their systems and processes based on the learning contained in it
Factors Favours Nondisclosure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report requires full discussion with staff in the services that were subject to review. This internal engagement process is ongoing and will be complete by end of October 2022



Southern Health and Social Care Trust

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disclosure of the reporting in absence of full engagement with staff regarding the facts and findings of the report may lead to psychological and emotional distress for staff who may feel they have not been appropriately engaged in the discussion process.• The Trust has a duty of care to its staff and to fulfil this on this occasion there is a requirement to engage staff fully in the report discussion process. Release of information to the world at large could compromise staff wellbeing.
Balancing Test	<p>For the public interest test, issues that favour release, need to be measured against the issues that favour non-disclosure. The public interest is not what interests the public, or an individual, but what will be greater good for the community as a whole.</p> <p>The Trust is responsible for the provision and management of health and social care for the population of the Southern Trust area, to achieve this successfully the Trust is required to create a psychologically safe and transparent working environment for its staff.</p> <p>At this time, it would not be in the public interest to release this information. The Southern HSC Trust will not disclose information prior to the process of staff engagement with the findings has been completed. The Trust will disclose the report when this is complete which is anticipated to be by the end of October. We conclude that the balance of the public interest lies in withholding the information.</p>

The publication date for releasing this report is the end of October 2023 and we will provide you with a copy of the report on its publication date.

Email: Foi.Team@Southerntrust.hscni.net