

FOI - 2143

15th February 2024

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 – INFORMATION REQUEST

Please include the following information for the following years: 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23:

1. Trust's overall spending on Translation and Interpreting Services
2. Total translators employed by the Trust
3. The hourly pay for in-house interpreters
4. What languages do they cover
5. Total number of in-person/face to face interpreting sessions booked (break down by language and clinical area)
6. How many appointments or procedures have had to be rescheduled/cancelled due to lack of an interpreter

Response:

Please include the following information for the following years: 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23:

1. Trust's overall spending on Translation and Interpreting Services

Financial Year	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Costs	£76,985	£89,424	£61,002

2. Total translators employed by the Trust

The Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts do not employ Interpreters. The HSC Interpreting Service is managed and administered by the HSC Business Services Organisation (BSO) on behalf of the Department of Health (DoH) to provide region-wide interpreting services to HSCNI-approved providers in Northern Ireland. The main aim of the Service is to improve access to Health & Social Care for Patients who do not speak English proficiently through the provision of trained, quality controlled, face to face Interpreters to ensure:

- clear, accurate and impartial communication between patients, service users and health and social care practitioners
- that the risks of misdiagnosis and litigation are minimised
- consent is truly informed
- confidentiality and respect for the dignity of service users
- reduction in the use of untrained interpreters (family, friends, children) to eliminate the risk of misunderstanding and misinterpretation

- HSC Practitioners and Staff can provide a responsive and efficient service
- compliance with legislative requirements (Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998) and the Race Relations (NI) Order 1997)

BSO manages a central approved register of over 443 self-employed Interpreters (Suppliers) covering a range of 36 different languages. HSC Interpreting is entirely demand-led, therefore Interpreters have no normal hours of work, and hours vary according to the needs of Patients/Clients/Service users.

3. The hourly pay for in-house interpreters

Per above response Interpreters are self-employed and engaged on a sessional basis. Interpreters have no normal hours of work, and hours vary according to the needs of Patients/Clients/Service users. The rates of pay for BSO-engaged Interpreters is as follows:

Normal Social Working Hours

Preparation Time: £5 preparation time fee to prepare terminology, research venues and to contact the service user to confirm the session details when requested.

Interpreting Time: During normal social working hours (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday) the pay rate for sessions is:

- for the first or part of the first hour: £20;
- after the first hour: 33 pence pro rata per minute.

Out of Hours

Preparation Time: No preparation fee is paid for emergency out of hours bookings. £5 preparation for pre-booked out of hour's sessions

Interpreting Time: Sessions which fall within the period Monday to Friday 5pm to 9am and Saturdays, Sundays and statutory holidays will be classed as out of hours. The payment for such sessions is as follows:

- for the first or part of the first hour: £30 (time and a half of the normal working hours rate);
- after the first hour: 50 pence pro rata per minute.

**The HSC Trust does not pay for interpreting provided by the BSO Interpreting Service. All costs are covered by SPPG.*

4. What languages do they cover

BSO Registered Interpreter Languages
1. Albanian
2. Amharic
3. Arabic
4. Bengali

5. Bulgarian
6. Chinese - Cantonese
7. Chinese - Hakka
8. Chinese - Mandarin
9. Czech
10. Farsi
11. French
12. Hindi
13. Hungarian
14. Italian
15. Japanese
16. Kurdish Kurmanji
17. Kurdish Sorani
18. Latvian
19. Lithuanian
20. Malayalam
21. Pashto
22. Polish
23. Portuguese
24. Punjabi
25. Romanian
26. Russian
27. Slovak
28. Somali
29. Spanish
30. Tagalog
31. Tetum
32. Thai
33. Tigrinya
34. Turkish
35. Ukrainian
36. Urdu

5. Total number of in-person/face to face interpreting sessions booked (break down by language and clinical area)

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
SHSCT Requests	26,231	38,495	46,309

Language and Department statistics available in attached spreadsheets.

6. How many appointments or procedures have had to be rescheduled/cancelled due to lack of an interpreter

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Non Provisions	154	486	1009

Non-provisions normally occur due to no registered language, limited Interpreters vs demand, short notice requests for particular languages (where all Interpreters are already booked). Please note that BSO Interpreting Service always suggests alternative options to HSC Trust Staff if unable to provide – this includes amending the appointment date/time to enable availability of an Interpreter to attend, use of telephone interpreting (through Big Word), or use of the contracted back-up Agency Flex Language Services. The BSO Interpreting Service does not hold data on how many appointments did not proceed due to no language support availability.

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