

FOI 2512

4th July 2024

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 – INFORMATION REQUEST

1. In your trust can you confirm do you undertake diagnostic radiography imaging only or do you also undertake radiotherapy treatment?

Response:

Within SHSCT diagnostic radiography is undertaken only. There is no radiotherapy.

2. How many HCPC registered diagnostic radiographers are employed in your diagnostic CT scanning departments in your trust? Please provide a copy of job description and essential criteria for job confirming if the criteria is BSc Radiography /diploma equivalent.

Response:

Within the CT departments across SHSCT there are a total of 41 HCPC registered diagnostic radiographers. Please find enclosed copy of job description.

3. How many HCPC registered therapeutic radiographers are employed in your diagnostic CT scanning departments in your trust? Please provide a copy of job description and essential criteria for job confirming if the criteria is BSc Radiotherapy /diploma equivalent.

Response:

There are <5 therapeutic radiographers employed in CT within SHSCT. These radiographers have completed the necessary training in order to become CT Radiographers and are HCPC registered. These radiographers will avail of PGC in CT Imaging in advanced practice in allied healthcare professionals; like any other radiographer employed within CT in SHSCT. The job description is the same as point 2.

The Trust has a legal duty to protect patient/staff 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(s). In reaching this decision the Trust has taken into account the small geographical area which the Trust serves, the specific and small cohort of staff referenced to, and 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 this information from disclosure. The Trust does not consider the disclosure of the redacted information to be fair to the individual(s) 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

4. The professional body the Society of Radiographers website clarifies- Can I work on a diagnostic CT scanner as a therapeutic radiographer? It States that “The SCoR does not advocate this change in or transfer of skills for any therapeutic radiographer to 'effectively' work as a diagnostic radiographer,”. Furthermore it states “Therapeutic radiographers use CT as an imaging tool in the planning and preparation of a radiotherapy treatment regime only.” Are there any HCPC registered therapeutic radiographers undertaking diagnostic CT scans in southern trust which is contrary to the above?

Response:

There is less <5 therapeutic radiographers employed in CT within SHSCT. These radiographers have completed the necessary training in order to become CT Radiographers and are HCPC registered. These radiographers will avail of PGC in CT Imaging in advanced practice in allied healthcare professionals; like any other radiographer employed within CT in SHSCT.

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5. What governance and HR processes are in place to ensure only diagnostic radiographers are undertaking the full range of diagnostic CT scans and if therapeutic radiographers are working in the CT diagnostic departments what processes are in place that ensures their scope of practice is limited to use CT as an imaging tool in the planning and preparation of a radiotherapy treatment regime only?

Response:

The same governance and HR processes apply for diagnostic and therapeutic radiographers. Training is completed relevant to the role, entitlement and competencies are signed off by the Modality Lead. There is an induction procedure for newly appointed staff acting as Operators. This includes an IR(ME)R competency template, reading and signing the Employers Procedures and Radiology safety policy. Our Q Pulse electronic document module ensures an electronic trace of signatures.

6. As diagnostic and therapeutic radiographers are two very distinct professions, are patients informed that a therapeutic radiographer is undertaking their diagnostic scan which is not in line with professional body and HCPC standards?

Response:

No, as therapeutic radiographers working in CT have completed the necessary training and signed competencies and entitlement to work in the CT department.

7. Do diagnostic and therapeutic student radiographers from Ulster University undergo clinical placements in your trust, and if only diagnostic radiographers, why can therapeutic radiographers not do their clinical placements if therapeutic radiographers are employed in your CT diagnostic scanning departments?

Response:

Clinical placements and placement centres are directed by the Ulster University, which ensure clinical centres are audited and accredited for student use. These clinical rotations are scheduled by the Ulster University and facilitated within the Trust. The only occasion when students arrange their own clinical time is for their "Elective Placement Period" which is also agreed via the Ulster University.

To our knowledge as a Trust we have never been approached by a Therapeutic Radiographer to undertake a clinical placement within CT.

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