

FOI 2583

15 August 2024

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 – INFORMATION REQUEST

In the past year, from April 2023 to April 2024, how many young people below 18 years of age have been placed in any form of temporary accommodation, including emergency shelters, hostels, and B&Bs, by the Southern Trust?

Response:

5

- 1. Please list the types of temporary accommodations used, specifying how many young people were placed in each type.**

Response:

2 - Self Contained Accommodation

2 - B&B initially before moving to self-contained accommodation on the same site.

3- Hotel

Please note total is greater than 5 as some young people had 2 or more types of accommodation.

- 2. For each type of temporary or emergency accommodation used, please confirm whether all staff, including temporary and permanent staff working with young people, have undergone Access NI checks prior to employment.**

Response:

Yes

- 3. What percentage of staff working directly with young people in these accommodations are fully trained and certified in child protection and safeguarding practices?**

Response:

100% of staff

4. What measures are in place to monitor and ensure the safety and welfare of young people placed in these temporary accommodations?

Response:

Bespoke support Plans based on an assessment of need.
Needs led visits at least once per week.
Financial Support
Provision of Mobile Phone
Diversionary activities including at evenings and weekends
Provision of wrap around support from Social Worker, Personal Advisor, Social Work Assistant and Community Living Support Worker
All young people subject to Children In Care Procedures
Accommodation Providers provided with safety plan, including emergency contacts for evenings and weekends
Floating Support
Regular liaison between Field Social Worker and other agencies involved.

5. How frequently does the Trust review these accommodations for compliance with regulatory and safety standards?

Response:

The Trust complies with the 2016 Unregulated Placement Guidance, utilising a small number of providers with whom we have a strong working relationship.

6. Has the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust placed any children or young people in unregulated accommodations such as B&Bs from April 2023 to April 2024? If so, please provide details on the circumstances and durations of such placements.

Response:

This information may be held by the Belfast Health & Social Care Trust and you may wish to contact them via the following:-

Contact details

Public Liaison
Belfast HSC Trust
1st Floor, Nore Villa
Knockbracken Healthcare Park
Belfast
BT8 8BH

Email: publicliaison@belfasttrust.hscni.net

7. What steps are taken to ensure the safety and suitability of these unregulated accommodations before placing any young person there?

Response:

The Trust complies with the 2016 Unregulated Placement Guidance

- 8. Please provide comparative data on the use of emergency and temporary accommodations for young people across all five trust areas in Northern Ireland for the same period.**

Response:

The Southern Trust does not have access to data from other Trusts.

- 9. Are there any plans or ongoing initiatives to reduce the reliance on temporary accommodations such as B&Bs for young people, especially in unregulated settings?**

Response:

Bail Fostering pilot is ongoing.

Plan to increase the number of beds in one Jointly Commissioned Accommodation from 4 to 7

Plan to seek funding for a Joint Commission Assessment Centre for SUASC – 3 beds

STAY Recruitment campaign is ongoing

Email: Foi.Team@Southerntrust.hscni.net