

FOI 2803

16th December 2024**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 – INFORMATION REQUEST**

Question 1: Does your Trust operate a home birth service for women and birthing people (regardless of whether such services are offered through a dedicated team or integrated into wider maternity services)?

Response:

Yes, the Birth at Home team commenced services within the Southern Trust in November 2021.

Question 2: If so, are home birth services available 24 hours a day, seven days a week across the whole geographic area overseen by the Trust?

Response:

Yes, birth at home services are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week across the whole geographic area overseen by the Trust.

Question 3: Has your Trust been able to provide home birth services to women and birthing people 24 hours a day, seven days a week without any suspensions or restrictions to that ability in the last 12 months? Please note in using the terms suspensions or restrictions we include (but are not limited to) restrictions to the days/times when home births can be attended by midwives or not being able to offer a home birth service at all for a period of time. We do not include unforeseen staff shortages on a particular shift here.

Response:

The Southern Trust has provided birth at home service from November 2021 until 9th September 2024, when the team was stood down due to increased staff absence within the team. Absence levels are under continuous review to ensure the service is safely reestablished when staffing levels allow.

Question 4: Please include the terms and reason(s) for any suspensions or restrictions in the last 12 months.

Response:

As outlined in question 3.

Question 5: Has your Trust been unable to send midwives to attend a home birth due to unforeseen circumstances (such as staff shortages or sickness) on a particular shift in the last 12 months? Please include how many times this has occurred in the last 12 months.

Response:

No, the Southern Trust are unable to send Midwives to attend home births from 9th September 2024.

Question 6: How many home births have been attended by midwives in your Trust in the last 12 months, including those resulting in intrapartum and/or postnatal transfer into hospital and being born at home with no-transfer-in?

Response:

Up to the 9th September 2024 the Southern Trust have had 45 births at home with Midwives in attendance. This includes those resulting in intrapartum and/or postnatal transfer into hospital.

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