

Ref. No: 0697  
Date: 15/02/24  
Subject: Translation Services

## REQUEST

Under Freedom of Information Act 2000, please can you provide the following information regarding language services.

1. Please confirm your overall spend on interpreting, translation and transcription services for the following financial years: 2021/22 and 2022/23.
2. Who is your incumbent supplier(s) for language services? If you have more than one supplier, which services does each one provide to you?
3. If you have a separate British Sign Language / non-spoken supplier, who is this?
4. If you have a separate transcription supplier, who is this?
5. Do you have any in-house interpreters / translators?
6. When are your current language services contract(s) due to expire, a) without extensions and b) with all possible extensions?
7. Could you please provide the name, phone number and email address of the contract manager responsible for language services?
8. Could you please provide the name, phone number and email address of the person responsible for your language services budget?
9. Could you please provide the following data for 2023:
  - Total number of face-to-face interpreting assignments (spoken language) and hours completed
  - Total number of face-to-face interpreting assignments (non-spoken language) and hours completed

- Total number of telephone interpreting calls and minutes completed
  - Total number of video interpreting calls (spoken language) and minutes completed
  - Total number of video interpreting calls (non-spoken language) and minutes completed
  - Total number of document translations and words translated
  - Total number of audio transcriptions and total audio duration
10. What were your top 20 highest-volume languages for interpreting / translation requests in 2023?
11. Can you please provide the fill rate % you received for the following services in 2023:
- Face-to-face interpreting
  - Telephone interpreting
  - Video interpreting
  - Document translation
  - Audio transcription
12. What languages has your provider been unable to source in the last 12 months?
13. Have service credits been applied on your language services contract in the last 12 months? If so, what performance failure was this linked to?
14. What social value has been delivered as part of this contract in the last 12 months?
15. If your contract was awarded through a tender process, can you please provide a copy of the winning bidder's tender?
16. What are your contracted rates for each of the following services?
- Spoken face-to-face interpreting: hourly rate
  - Non-spoken face-to-face interpreting: hourly rate

- Telephone interpreting: per minute rate
- Spoken video interpreting: per minute rate
- Non-spoken video interpreting: per minute rate
- Document translation: per word rate
- Audio transcription: per audio minute rate

17. Has your provider of language services increased their charge rate to you in the last 12 months?

18. What is the Authority's typical route to market?

19. Does the Authority currently have any interpreter on wheel devices as part of their current contract? If yes please advise how many and if these are provided free of charge or paid for by the Authority.

20. Could you please provide the name, phone number and email address of the person responsible for the language services budget?

21. Could you please provide the name, phone number and email address of the person in charge of procurement for the Authority?

## RESPONSE

St Helens and Knowsley Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust and Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust became a single legal entity known as Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2023, as such parts of the response may be provided in two sections relating to the hospital sites of each of the legacy organisations.

1. Please confirm your overall spend on interpreting, translation and transcription services for the following financial years: 2021/22 and 2022/23.

St Helens and Knowsley:

£125,960.36 (2021/22) and £297,516.46 (2022/23)

Southport and Ormskirk:

£120,623.83 (2021/22) and £124,635.95 (2022/23)

- 2. Who is your incumbent supplier(s) for language services? If you have more than one supplier, which services does each one provide to you?**

DA Languages

- 3. If you have a separate British Sign Language / non-spoken supplier, who is this?**

St Helens and Knowsley:

St Helens Deafness Resource Centre

Southport and Ormskirk:

On the previous contract for legacy Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust. - Lifeline was used as the second provider. Going forward on the new MWL contract Southport and Ormskirk sites will be using the Deafness Resource Centre.

- 4. If you have a separate transcription supplier, who is this?**

N/A

- 5. Do you have any in-house interpreters / translators?**

No

- 6. When are your current language services contract(s) due to expire, a) without extensions and b) with all possible extensions?**

1<sup>st</sup> September 2023 – 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024 with extension options.

- 7. Could you please provide the name, phone number and email address of the contract manager responsible for language services?**

Please direct queries via the Procurement Department – contact details available publicly via the Trust’s website or [purchasing@sthk.nhs.uk](mailto:purchasing@sthk.nhs.uk).

- 8. Could you please provide the name, phone number and email address of the person responsible for your language services budget?**

Please see response to question 7.

- 9. Could you please provide the following data for 2023:**

- **Total number of face-to-face interpreting assignments (spoken language) and hours completed**
- **Total number of face-to-face interpreting assignments (non-spoken language) and hours completed**
- **Total number of telephone interpreting calls and minutes completed**
- **Total number of video interpreting calls (spoken language) and minutes completed**
- **Total number of video interpreting calls (non-spoken language) and minutes completed**
- **Total number of document translations and words translated**
- **Total number of audio transcriptions and total audio duration**

Section 43 – Commercial Interests – of the Freedom of Information Act sets out an exemption to disclosure if:

*The release of the information is likely to prejudice the commercial Interests of any person. (A person may be an individual, a company, the public authority itself or any other legal entity.)*

Information can only be withheld under this exemption if the public authority is satisfied that to release the information would damage someone's commercial Interests. A commercial Interest relates to a person's ability to participate competitively in a commercial activity

Where a public authority is satisfied that the release of information would prejudice someone's commercial Interests, it can only refuse to provide the information if it is satisfied that the public Interest in withholding the information outweighs the public Interest in disclosing it.

The bias is in favour of disclosure and there will be occasions where information is released even though it is likely to prejudice someone's commercial Interest. If the public Interest is in favour of disclosure, the FOIA requires the information to be released.

In consideration of this exemption, the public interest test has been undertaken to weigh the public interest in disclosure against the benefits of maintaining the commercial confidentiality of the information. The public interest test is shown below:

<b>Public Interest Test – Section 43 Commercial Interests</b>	
<b>Disclosure</b>	<b>Non-Disclosure</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing the accountability of the decision makers and public sector financing</li> <li>Promoting the transparency of public sector procurement and financing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prejudice the Trust as a purchaser this service</li> <li>Prejudice the position of the Trust in future procurements of service</li> <li>Prejudice the Trust relations with its suppliers</li> </ul> <p>Prejudice the position of the supplier in future tenders with the Trust and other organisations</p>
<p><b>Outcome</b> – Following the public interest test, the Trust will maintain the confidentiality of the information by applying the section 43 exemption. The information requested in Q9 Q11 Q12 Q13 Q16 and q17 would allow for the price per minute or contact be calculated and undermine the current service provider. This is likely to have a substantial impact on negotiations for any future contract to provide the interpreter service to the trust and a third party.</p> <p>However it is recognised that there is a public interest in public sector procurement. As a consequence the other information regarding the overall cost has been provided.</p>	

**10. What were your top 20 highest-volume languages for interpreting / translation requests in 2023?**

St Helens and Knowsley:

Polish
Arabic
Various
Romanian
Cantonese
Kurdish / Kurdish Sorani
Portuguese
Hungarian
Mandarin
Tamil
Bulgarian
Spanish
Urdu
Farsi (Persian)
Turkish
Punjabi
Tigrinya
Sinhalese
Vietnamese

Southport and Ormskirk:

- Polish
- Portuguese
- Hungarian
- Romanian
- BSL
- Arabic
- Cantonese
- Bulgarian
- Spanish
- Urdu
- Kurdish/Kurdish Sorani
- Farsi (Persian)
- Mandarin
- Tamil
- Turkish
- Punjabi
- Vietnamese
- Various
- Sinhalese
- Tigrinya

**11. Can you please provide the fill rate % you received for the following services in 2023:**

- **Face-to-face interpreting**
- **Telephone interpreting**
- **Video interpreting**
- **Document translation**
- **Audio transcription**

**12. What languages has your provider been unable to source in the last 12 months?**

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<p><b>Outcome</b> – Following the public interest test, the Trust will maintain the confidentiality of the information by applying the section 43 exemption. The information requested in Q9 Q11 Q12 Q13 Q16 and q17 would allow for the price per minute or contact be calculated and undermine the current service provider. This is likely to have a substantial impact on negotiations for any future contract to provide the interpreter service to the trust and a third party.</p> <p>However it is recognised that there is a public interest in public sector procurement. As a consequence the other information regarding the overall cost has been provided.</p>	



**13. Have service credits been applied on your language services contract in the last 12 months? If so, what performance failure was this linked to?**

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However it is recognised that there is a public interest in public sector procurement. As a consequence the other information regarding the overall cost has been provided.

**14. What social value has been delivered as part of this contract in the last 12 months?**

We do not record this information.

**15. If your contract was awarded through a tender process, can you please provide a copy of the winning bidder's tender?**

The contract was not awarded through a tender process.

**16. What are your contracted rates for each of the following services?**

Section 43 – Commercial Interests – of the Freedom of Information Act sets out an exemption to disclosure if:

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**17. Has your provider of language services increased their charge rate to you in the last 12 months?**

Section 43: commercial interests

**18. What is the Authority’s typical route to market?**

The Authority procures in line with procurement legislation and Trust’s Standing Financial Instructions as well as other legislation, regulation and Procurement Policy Notes as issued from time to time.

**19. Does the Authority currently have any interpreter on wheel devices as part of their current contract? If yes please advise how many and if these are provided free of charge or paid for by the Authority.**

St Helens and Knowsley:

No

Southport and Ormskirk:

No

**20. Could you please provide the name, phone number and email address of the person responsible for the language services budget?**

Please direct queries via the Procurement Department – contact details available publicly via the Trust’s website or [purchasing@sthk.nhs.uk](mailto:purchasing@sthk.nhs.uk).

**21. Could you please provide the name, phone number and email address of the person in charge of procurement for the Authority?**

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