

Ref. No: 0444
Date: 14/11/23
Subject: Physician Associates

REQUEST

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 for the period August 2022 - August 2023 regarding the employment and related details of Physician Associates (PAs) within your Trust. I believe this information is essential for public interest, transparency, and to better understand the role of PAs within the healthcare system. To facilitate the processing of my request, please provide the following details:

1. Number of Physician Associates (PAs) Employed:

Please provide the total number of Physician Associates employed in your Trust for the stated time period.

2. Average Annual Salary of PAs:

Please disclose the average annual salary, or salary range, for Physician Associates employed in your Trust for the stated time period, and a breakdown of how many PAs are on each Agenda for Change pay band.

3. Average Weekly Working Hours:

Specify the average number of hours worked per week by Physician Associates employed at your Trust for the stated time period, and the average number of hours worked outside of the 9am-5pm time range.

4. Job Duties and Responsibilities:

Provide a detailed description of the job duties and responsibilities of Physician Associates within your Trust for the stated time period.

5. Supervision and Accessibility:

Clarify what profession and grade are supervising Physician Associates and whether PAs at your Trust are able to attend work if their supervising clinician is not immediately contactable by them.

6. Role in Filling Rota Gaps:

Indicate whether Physician Associates at your trust are permitted to fill rota gaps left by GMC Registered Medical Doctors. If so, specify the grade of doctors they are authorised to cover for.

7. Hourly Rates for Bank Shifts:

Please provide the hourly rate range paid to Physician Associates working bank shifts at your Trust for the stated time period. Break down this range according to years of service if applicable.

8. Prospective Employment:

Please disclose the number of Physician Associates your Trust plans to employ in the next 5 years, or business cases out for employing PAs in the next 5 years.

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 1st 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. Number of Physician Associates (PAs) Employed:

Please provide the total number of Physician Associates employed in your Trust for the stated time period.

16 PAs employed during the period, August 2022 to August 2023.

2. Average Annual Salary of PAs:

Please disclose the average annual salary, or salary range, for Physician Associates employed in your Trust for the stated time period, and a breakdown of how many PAs are on each Agenda for Change pay band.

Band 6 (x6) and Band 7 (x10). For further information on salary ranges, please visit: <https://www.nhsemployers.org/articles/pay-scales-202324>.

3. Average Weekly Working Hours:

Specify the average number of hours worked per week by Physician Associates employed at your Trust for the stated time period, and the average number of hours worked outside of the 9am-5pm time range.

PA contracts are 37.5 hours per week.

4. Job Duties and Responsibilities:

Provide a detailed description of the job duties and responsibilities of Physician Associates within your Trust for the stated time period.

Please find the '*Job Summary*' attached.

5. Supervision and Accessibility:

Clarify what profession and grade are supervising Physician Associates and whether PAs at your Trust are able to attend work if their supervising clinician is not immediately contactable by them.

Profession – Medical & Dental; Grade – Consultant; and Supervision Arrangement – all PAs are notified of the named consultant responsible for supervising them on shift.

6. Role in Filling Rota Gaps:

Indicate whether Physician Associates at your trust are permitted to fill rota gaps left by GMC Registered Medical Doctors. If so, specify the grade of doctors they are authorised to cover for.

PAs are not permitted to fill rota gaps left by GMC registered doctors.

7. Hourly Rates for Bank Shifts:

Please provide the hourly rate range paid to Physician Associates working bank shifts at your Trust for the stated time period. Break down this range according to years of service if applicable.

St Helens and Knowsley:

N/A – don't utilise PAs via the staff bank.

Southport and Ormskirk:

Rate card is £52 per hour.

8. Prospective Employment:

Please disclose the number of Physician Associates your Trust plans to employ in the next 5 years, or business cases out for employing PAs in the next 5 years.

The Trust has no plans at present to expand the PA workforce.