

Ref. No: 0935
Date: 14/05/24
Subject: Audiology Services

REQUEST

I am writing with a Freedom of Information request regarding the provision and delivery of audiology services within your Trust.

1. To better understand how your Trust deals with audiology services, please clarify whether your Acute Trust provides these services:
 - In-house (i.e. delivered in your NHS Acute Trust or provided by another NHS organisation)
 - Outsources (i.e. delivered by an independent provider in their care setting)
 - Insources (i.e. delivered by an independent provider in your care setting)
2. Additionally, please provide the following data for your Acute Trust and for each financial year 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23, and 2023/24:

Hearing Assessments

- a. How many patients had a hearing assessment within the following settings and what was the total spending in £ on treating these patients (where possible please could you give the data per independent provider contracted):
 - In-house
 - Outsourced
 - Insourced

Hearing Aid Fittings

- b. How many patients had a hearing aid fitting assessment within the following settings and what was the total spending in £ on treating these patients (where possible please could you give the data per independent provider contracted):

- In-house
- Outsourced
- Insourced

Hearing Aid Aftercare

c. How many patients had hearing aid aftercare performed within the following settings and what was the total spending in £ on treating these patients (where possible please could you give the data per independent provider contracted):

- In-house
- Outsourced
- Insourced

Hearing Aid Devices

d. How many hearing aid devices were delivered to patients within the following settings and what was the total spend £ on hearing aid devices for these patients in (where possible please could you give the data per independent provider contracted):

- In-house
- Outsourced
- Insourced

Other

3. Could you please provide a copy of the service specification given to all bidders for when the contract for hearing aid services was last advertised?

If any of the specific splits are not available, please provide total figures for the system and specify which main splits are recorded by your Trust (in-house / independent sector).

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.

Section 12: cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit

The Trust would need to undertake a manual review of patient records to provide the request data, which we estimate would far exceed the appropriate time limits.

Under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act, Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust does not have to comply with a request where it is estimated that the cost of compliance would exceed the appropriate limit of £450. The appropriate limit is specified within the regulations and represents the estimated cost of one person spending 2½ working days answering the request, either wholly or partially.