

Email: foi.tsdfd@nhs.net
Our Ref: TSD10701

2 October 2026

Dear Sir/Madam

Request for Information

We are writing to confirm that we have now completed our search for the information you requested.

A copy of the information is below:

I would like to request information relating to reported incidents of violence and aggression within Emergency Departments (EDs) operated by the Trust.

Please provide the following information for each ED site managed by the Trust, broken down by month, between January 2018 and May 2026:

- 1. Please provide the total number of reported incidents involving violence, aggression, or abusive behaviour in Emergency Departments**
- 2. Where available, please separately categorise [LO1] incidents by type, including:**
 - **Verbal abuse**
 - **threats of violence**
 - **physical assault**
 - **sexual harassment**
 - **discrimination-based abuse (because of: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation)**

We migrated incident reporting systems in October 2023. As the tables draw on two data sources, the recorded incident categories differ between the tables and do not directly correspond with those specified in your request. We have therefore provided the information under the categories in which it is held.

To provide the information using the categories requested, we would need to access, review and reclassify each of the 972 incident records individually. Completing this work within the 18-hour cost limit would require each record to be reviewed and reclassified in approximately one minute. Given the steps involved, we are satisfied that the work would exceed the appropriate limit under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Category	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	January 2023 – September 2023
Physical Abuse/Assault/Discrimination	0	0	0	<5	<5	15
Racial Abuse/Assault/Discrimination	<5	0	0	0	0	0
Verbal Abuse/Assault/Discrimination	0	0	0	<5	<5	7
Physical Abuse/Assault against patient by Staff/Visitor/Public	<5	<5	0	0	0	0
Racial Abuse/Assault against patient by Staff/Visitor/Public	0	0	<5	0	0	0
Sexual Abuse/Assault against patient by Staff/Visitor/Public	0	0	0	<5	<5	0
Race or Ethnicity	0	0	0	0	0	<5
Other (e.g. carer, ex-offender etc)	0	<5	0	<5	<5	<5
Physical Assault – clinical reason	19	8	<5	<5	<5	0

Physical Assault – non-clinical reason	5	6	15	7	<5	<5
Threatening/Abusive Behaviour	66	108	80	71	14	19
Staff feeling vulnerable	9	18	18	<5	<5	<5
Other Disruptive/Abusive Behaviour	0	0	0	5	<5	5
Total number of incidents	104	142	115	92	35	55

Category	October 2023 – December 2023	2024	2025	2026
Behaviour that Challenges –	<5	<5	6	<5
Behaviour that Challenges - Discriminatory Behaviour (Patient to Patient)	0	0	0	<5
Behaviour that Challenges - Discriminatory Behaviour (Staff to Staff)	0	0	<5	0
Behaviour that Challenges - Physical Assault (Patient to Staff)	<5	12	18	17
Behaviour that Challenges - Physical Assault (Patient to Third Party)	0	<5	<5	<5
Behaviour that Challenges - Racial Assault (Patient to Staff)	<5	<5	8	<5
Behaviour that Challenges - Sexual Assault (Patient to Patient)	0	0	<5	0
Behaviour that Challenges - Sexual Assault (Patient to Staff)	0	0	<5	<5
Behaviour that Challenges - Verbal Assault (Patient to Patient)	0	0	<5	0

Behaviour that Challenges - Verbal Assault (Patient to Staff)	<5	31	15	7
Behaviour that Challenges - Verbal Assault (Third Party to Staff)	0	0	<5	0
Use of Restraint/Restrictive Practice	5	108	99	61
Violence, Aggression & Abuse - Discriminatory Behaviour (Third Party to Patient)	0	<5	0	0
Violence, Aggression & Abuse - Physical Assault (Third Party to Patient)	<5	0	0	<5
Violence, Aggression & Abuse - Sexual Assault (Third Party to Patient)	0	0	<5	0
Total number of incidents	16	159	158	96

Low Numbers:

Where there are less than 5, we are unable to provide the exact information you require as this may enable the identification of our employees, members of the public or patients. This would constitute personal information and would be considered exempt under Section 40 of the Freedom of Information Act. Section 40 (FOI Act) provides an exemption to disclosure, where disclosure would contravene any of the Data Protection principles. This exemption is an absolute exemption that is not subject to the public interest test. Where the information relates to an individual who can be identified from that data, or from that data when added to other information, in the possession of, or likely to come into the possession of the data controller, this meets the definition of personal data as defined by the Data Protection Act.

The information supplied to you continues to be protected by the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. You are free to use it for your own purposes, including any non-commercial research you are doing and for the purposes of news reporting.

If you wish to discuss any of the above, please contact us, quoting the FOI reference number above.

If you are unhappy with the way in which we have handled your request, please contact the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Lead in the first instance. If you wish to make a formal complaint, you should write to our Complaints Manager at Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust, First Floor Bowyer Building, Torbay Hospital, Torquay TQ2 7AA or by email to tsdft.feedback@nhs.net

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint or the internal review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the Information Commissioner will only make a decision once you have exhausted the complaints and/or internal review process provided by us. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or through this link <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/>

Yours sincerely,

Freedom of Information Team