

Email: foi.tsdfd@nhs.net
Our Ref: TSD10778

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 am writing under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to formally request information regarding how your Trust delivers pathology and laboratory services.

For each of the broad test categories listed below, I would like to receive data covering the following financial years (1 April to 31 March): FY2019/20, FY2020/21, FY2021/22, FY2022/23, FY2023/24 and FY2024/25

The broad test categories are:

- Haematology and coagulation
- Blood bank
- Clinical Biochemistry
- Microbiology & Virology
- Immunology
- Histopathology & Cellular Pathology (including Cytology)
- Genetics & Molecular Pathology
- Point of Care Testing (POCT)

For each category above, please could you provide:

1. Test volumes: the total number of tests/samples processed, by year, for each of the years listed above.

2. Service delivery model: whether the category is delivered in-house, via a joint venture/partnership, or fully outsourced to a third party, and the name of the partner organisation, JV entity, or outsourced provider in each case.

3. Contract details: the name of the current contract holder/provider, the contract start date, and the date the contract is next due for renewal or re-tender.

To simplify data collection, I have attached an Excel template for your use. Please complete one row per broad category listed above, adding further rows if a category is split across more than one provider or delivery model.

We have considered whether we are able to provide the information requested within the appropriate cost limit set out under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. We are applying Section 12 of the Act to this request, as we estimate that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit.

Section 12(1) of the Act states that a public authority is not obliged to comply with a request for information if it estimates that the cost of doing so would exceed the appropriate limit. For NHS bodies, this limit is £450, which equates to 18 hours of staff time calculated at £25 per hour.

In order to respond to your request, the Trust would need to access and extract information from multiple systems, review legacy data, validate and reconcile figures between systems, obtain and verify contract information, and collate and quality assure the response. These steps would need to be undertaken across the eight broad test categories and financial years requested.

Based on the work required to respond to one financial year across the eight broad test categories, we estimate that this would take approximately 22.5 hours. This includes approximately 1.5 hours to access and pull data across systems, approximately 3 hours to review legacy data, approximately 8 hours to validate and reconcile figures between systems, approximately 2 hours to obtain and verify contract information, and approximately 8 hours to collate and quality assure the response.

As the estimated time required to respond to one financial year across the eight broad test categories exceeds the 18-hour appropriate limit, the Trust is not required to comply with the request in its current form. The full scope of the request, which covers eight broad test categories across six financial years, would exceed the appropriate limit further.

In accordance with our duty to provide advice and assistance under Section 16 of the Act, you may wish to refine your request by reducing the number of financial years, limiting the request to fewer pathology/test categories, or narrowing the scope to either test volumes or contract/service delivery information only. The Trust may then be able to reconsider whether the refined request can be answered within the appropriate cost limit.

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