

Strategic Planning and Performance Group



Sara Boyce
Via email – sara@pprproject.org

Strategic Planning and Performance Group

Gransha Park House
15 Gransha Park
Clooney Road
Londonderry
BT47 6FN

Email: david.johnston@hscni.net

Our Ref: DOH 2023-0242

Date: 6th September 2023

Dear Ms Boyce,

Reference – Freedom of Information Request

Thank you for your request for information. Your request was received by email on 7th August 2023. Your request has been processed under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I have now had an opportunity to consider your request and my response is set out below on a point by point basis and in the attached appendices.

Please note that the information presented throughout this response has been sourced from the Monthly Mental Health Self Harm returns from the Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland.

Please also take note of the caveats which accompany the information provided in response to each individual section.

Point 1.

Your query read, "Please provide me with the following information for 2022-2023.

- *The number of patients presenting in hospital ED in suicidal crisis/ with self-harm or a mental health crisis, broken down by location."*

Response.

The information provided in Tables 1 and 2 below refer to the number of referrals for a Mental Health assessment from the ED (including short stay units/observation units). This is related to patients who presented at ED having deliberately self-harmed or who were expressing suicidal thoughts which were responded to by MH professionals. A breakdown by location is only available at HSC Trust level.

Table 1 - Numbers of MH assessment referrals from the A&E Department (including short stay units/observation units) by Trust in 2022/23 (Adults)

| Belfast | Northern | South Eastern | Southern | Western | Total |
|---------|-------------------------|---------------|----------|---------|-------|
| 1,965 | Not currently available | 957 | 1,674 | 915 | 5,511 |

Source: Monthly Mental Health Self Harm returns from Trusts

- Please note that in relation to adults, SPPG holds Trust level information for 4 of the 5 Trusts. Northern Trust has been unable to provide this information since Feb 21 due to system migration to PARIS.

Table 2 - Numbers of MH assessment referrals from the A&E Department (including short stay units/observation units) by Trust in 2022/23 (Children)

| Belfast/South Eastern | Northern | Southern | Western | Total |
|-----------------------|----------|----------|-------------------------|-------|
| 218 | 270 | 291 | Not currently available | 779 |

Source: Monthly Mental Health Self Harm returns from Trusts

- Please note that in relation to children (CAMHS), SPPG holds information for Belfast/South Eastern, Northern and Southern Trusts. Belfast Trust provides the service on behalf of South Eastern Trust. Western Trust information is not available.

Point 2.

Your query read, “Please provide me with the following information for 2022-2023.

- The number of these who were seen by a Specialist Mental Health Liaison Team in ED
 - a) within the target waiting time of 2 hours
 - b) outside of the target waiting time of 2 hours.”

Response.

The information provided in Tables 3 and 4 below refer to the total number of referrals for assessment of patients who presented at ED having deliberately self-harmed or expressing suicidal thoughts which were responded to by MH professionals (face to face) and responded to either a) within 2 hours, or b) more than 2 hours.

Table 3 - The numbers of referrals for a Mental Health assessment from the ED (including short stay units/observation units) by a Mental Health professional by Trust in 2022/23 (Adults), and responded to:

- a) within 2 hours
- b) more than 2 hours.

| Response Time | Belfast | Northern | South Eastern | Southern | Western | Total |
|-------------------|---------|-------------------------|---------------|----------|---------|-------|
| Less than 2 hours | 966 | Not currently available | 635 | 1,276 | 574 | 3,451 |
| More than 2 hours | 999 | | 322 | 398 | 341 | 2,060 |

Source: Monthly Mental Health Self Harm returns from Trusts

- Please note that in relation to adults, SPPG holds Trust level information for 4 of the 5 Trusts. Northern Trust has been unable to provide this information since Feb 21 due to system migration to PARIS.

Table 4 - The numbers of referrals for a Mental Health assessment from the ED (including short stay units/observation units) by a Mental Health professional by Trust in 2022/23 (Children), and responded to:

- a) within 2 hours
- b) more than 2 hours.

| Response Time | Belfast/South Eastern | Northern | Southern | Western | Total |
|-------------------|-----------------------|----------|----------|-------------------------|-------|
| Less than 2 hours | 57 | 270 | 291 | Not currently available | 327 |
| More than 2 hours | 161 | | | | 452 |

Source: Monthly Mental Health Self Harm returns from Trusts

- Please note that in relation to children (CAMHS), SPPG holds information for Belfast/South Eastern, Northern and Southern Trusts. Belfast Trust provides the service on behalf of South Eastern Trust. Western Trust information is not available. Northern and Southern Trusts can only provide overall totals for response times as the breakdown by time category is not available for the 22/23 year.

Point 3.

Your query read, *“Please provide me with the following information for 2022-2023.*

- A breakdown of waiting times which exceeded the 2-hour target.”*

Response.

The SPPG is not in receipt of information which would allow me to provide a response to this part of your request.

You may wish to contact the respective Health and Social Care Trusts directly in regards to this point, who may be in a position to assist further.

Point 4.

Your query read, *“Please provide me with the following information for 2022-2023.*

- The number of individuals assessed by the Specialist Mental Health Liaison Team who were offered a 7-day follow up appointment.”*

Response.

The SPPG is not in receipt of information which would allow me to provide a response to this part of your request.

The 7 day follow up only applies to individuals who have been discharged from a mental health inpatient hospital/facility AND who are subject to a continuing care plan in the community.

Point 5.

Your query read, *"Please provide me with the following information for 2022-2023."*

- *The number of those individuals in Q4 who availed of a 7-day follow up appointment."*

Response.

I would refer you to my response to Point 4 above.

Point 6.

Your query read, *"Please provide me with the following information for 2022-2023."*

- *Frequency and format for providing information in 1-5 above, to the Department of Health."*

Response.

The 'Mental Health Self Harm Following ED Attendance Activity' is an aggregate return and is received on a monthly frequency.

Point 7.

Your query read, *"Please also provide the following documentation:"*

- *A copy of the Implementation Plan for the Regional Mental Health Crisis Service for NI, as per Action 10 of the Department of Health's Regional Mental Health Crisis Service for NI Policy Paper, published Aug 2021."*

Response.

I would direct you to appendix 1 attached in response.

Point 8.

Your query read, *“Please also provide the following documentation:*

- *An update on the roll out of the Regional Mental Health Liaison Service, as per in Action 6 of the Department of Health’s Regional Mental Health Crisis Service for NI Policy Paper, published in August 2021.”*

Response.

The Mental Health Strategy 2022-23 included two actions relating to the design of the Regional Mental Health Crisis Model, developing a definition of crisis and completing a Service Mapping Exercise of the current service. The Regional Mental Health Crisis Service Action Plan has been agreed and was being implemented across all workstreams.

The recent completion of a service Mapping Exercise is in preparation for developing the future standardised regional model, which is the key priority for 2023-24. The Mental Health Liaison Service is a key component of this model and a standardised service will be introduced as part of the overall regional Crisis service model.

Point 9.

Your query read, *“Please also provide the following documentation:*

- *Details of any continued operation of the Card Before You Leave scheme, including its current status and the number of people given a follow up appointment prior to leaving the ED.*

Response.

The Card Before You Leave (CBYL) scheme is operational in some HSC Trusts, although it is not implemented in all hospital settings where a 24/7 MHLS or mental health provision exists. The work on actions 12 & 27 of the Mental Health Strategy plans to reduce and phase out CBYL as the aim is to provide regional consistency with 24/7 mental health provision to all acute hospitals.

The information provided in Tables 5 and 6 below (Adult Mental Health and CAMHS) refer to the numbers of patients assessed by ED staff as low risk and referred for next day follow-up (CBYL).

Table 5 - Numbers of Adults assessed by A&E staff as low risk and referred for next day follow-up (CBYL), by Trust in 2022/23

| Belfast | Northern | South Eastern | Southern | Western | Total |
|---------|-------------------------|---------------|----------|---------|--------------|
| 2,112 | Not currently available | 893 | 16 | 133 | 3,154 |

Source: Monthly Mental Health Self Harm returns from Trusts

- Please note that in relation to adults, SPPG holds Trust level information for 4 of the 5 Trusts. Northern Trust has been unable to provide this information since Feb 21 due to system migration to PARIS.

Table 6 - Numbers of children assessed by A&E staff as low risk and referred for next day follow-up (CBYL), by Trust in 2022/23

| Belfast/South Eastern | Northern | Southern | Western | Total |
|-----------------------|----------|----------|-------------------------|------------|
| 379 | 53 | 0 | Not currently available | 432 |

Source: Monthly Mental Health Self Harm returns from Trusts

- Please note that in relation to children (CAMHS), SPPG holds information for Belfast/South Eastern, Northern and Southern Trusts. Belfast Trust provides the service on behalf of South Eastern Trust. Western Trust information is not available.

Point 10.

Your query read, *“Please also provide the following documentation:*

- *A copy of the Regional Suicide Prevention Care Pathway, published in September 2021.”*

Response.

I would direct you to appendix 2 attached in response.

If you feel that the information I have provided above does not fully meet your request, you have the right to request that the Department formally review this decision within two calendar months of the date of this letter.

If you wish to do so, please write to Mr Kenneth Moore (ken.moore@hscni.net), HSCNI Southern Office, Tower Hill, Armagh BT61 9DR.

If after such an internal review you are still unhappy with the response, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, CHESHIRE SK9 5AF, who will undertake an independent review.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely,

Mr David Johnston
Information Governance Officer
SPPG – Western Office