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13th May 2025

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[REDACTED]

Dear Sir/Madam

Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000 - Request for Information Reference: Pathology Services

I am writing in response to your request for information under the FOI 2000.

I can confirm in accordance with Section 1 (1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 that we do hold the information you have requested. A response to each part of your request is provided below. Please accept our apologies for the delay.

Home, Community, Hospital.

FOI Request / Question	Question Response	Is there an exemption?	Exemption	Exemption Details
1. Does the trust/UHB outsource wet surgical specimens? If so, how many specimens are outsourced per annum?	No, we do not outsource wet/surgical specimens.			
2. What is the subspecialty of the outsourced specimens? E.g. Skin, Endoscopy etc. Please breakdown if possible.	None are outsourced for the technical elements (wet specimens/microtomy). Only outsourced for reporting; the main speciality is Endoscopy.			
3. How much does the trust/UHB spend per annum on outsourced wet specimen processing? Please breakdown for the fiscal years 21/22, 22/23, 23/24.	Not applicable.			
4. Does the trust report in house on wet processed specimens or is this done externally?	Yes, wet processed specimens are reported in-house.			
5. Which organisation(s) does the trust outsource the wet specimen processing to?	Not applicable.			

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Home, Community, Hospital.

6. How much does the trust spend per annum on outsourced block specimen processing? Please breakdown for the fiscal years 21/22, 22/23, 23/24.	Nothing, no block specimen processing is outsourced.			
7. Is there a backlog of unreported specimens with the trust/UHB? If so, for how many patients total?	1466 cases (non-urgent).			
8. What are the current turnaround times (TAT) for the processing of wet specimens within the trust/UHB?	Current TAT is 80% in 2 days, current oldest case is 7 days old. We have classed 'wet' as specimen taken to specimen dissected.			
9. Does the trust outsource for tissue staining?	No, not for routine staining.			
10. How much does the trust/UHB spend on outsourced staining per annum? Please breakdown for the fiscal years 21/22, 22/23, 23/24.	<p>2021 - 2022 (immunocytochemistry staining): £76,694.64 2022 - 2023 (immunocytochemistry staining): £74,560.93 2023 - 2024 (immunocytochemistry staining): £77,238.68</p> <p>Her2 and FISH 2021 - 2022: £33,930 Her2 and FISH 2022 - 2023: £33,605 Her2 and FISH 2023 - 2024: £43,</p>			

	424 (price increase and volume of work increase)			
11. What is the current TA for wet reporting externally?	Not applicable.			
12. Does the trust/UHB have a minimum contracted volume with outsourcers?	Yes, we hold contracts with 2 outsourcers but no minimum volume.			
13. What is the min, mean, and max cost for wet work alone?	Not applicable.			
14. What is the cost for professional external reporting?	The cost of our 2 outsourcing suppliers vary dependant on either number of slides per case or the RCPATH points allocated to the case.	Yes	Section 43	<p>Section 43 - Commercial interests It is our opinion that the information sought in relation to costs is exempt from disclosure pursuant to section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). S43(2) relates to information that is exempt from disclosure that could have a detrimental effect on the commercial interests of "...any person." The Trust considers that at this time the commercial interests of the Trust, third parties and overall the NHS could be detrimentally impacted upon. Please see the public interest test below.</p> <p>Public Interest Test We recognise that the disclosure of the information sought in relation to the costs involved would provide transparency in the use of public funds by the Trust and the NHS in general. It would also assist the general populous with</p>

				<p>transparency in decision making by the Trust and their transactions with third parties.</p> <p>Conversely to the factors demonstrated above in favour of disclosure, it is felt that the Trust, third party suppliers and overall the NHS could be disadvantaged should the information sought in relation to costs being made available. Suppliers compete with one another in a competitive environment and to provide the value of the costs involved may allow rival companies to undercut the Trust current suppliers, lead to loss of confidence by suppliers and customers and could cause significant harm and disadvantage to the Trust and suppliers.</p> <p>The disclosure could also adversely impact on any on-going or future procurement processes for the reasons outlined above. Any disclosure by the Trust could also in future discourage the provision of commercially sensitive information necessary to respond properly to the Trusts Invitation To Tender, and would be likely to affect and undermine the Trusts bargaining position in any future procurement process or negotiations. Ultimately civil action could be taken against the Trust should information be disclosed that adversely affects the commercial interests of current and/or future suppliers.</p>
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				<p>As a result, it is in the Trust's opinion that this sufficiently demonstrates the prejudice which could be caused through disclosure.</p> <p>Balance Test It is important to bear in mind that any disclosure under the FOI Act is a disclosure to the public at large and not just to the applicant. It is recognised that there is a general public interest in the Trust being open and transparent. However, it is not believed that this public interest is served in disclosure for damage that would be caused as outlined above.</p> <p>Therefore, – the Trust considers that releasing this information would not be in the public interest, as the public interest does not outweigh the prejudice as set out above. Further guidance can be accessed from the Information Commissioner's Office https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guidance-index/freedom-of-information-and-environmental-information-regulations/section-43-commercial-interests/</p>
15. How many cases are reported by the trust annually?	On average, 26,000 cases are reported per annum.			
16. What percentage is outsourced for professional work?	Of the total cases reported annually, 7% were outsourced in the last year.			

17. What percentage is outsourced for technical work?	None.			
18. How many pathologists does the trust/UHB employ?	8.			
19. How many cases on average does a single pathologist report annually?	On average, a single Pathologist reports 4000 cases annually.			
20. Does the trust/UHB have a digital slide scanner?	Yes.			
21. If so, who is the manufacturer of the scanner? e.g. Phillips, Leica etc.	Hamamatsu.			

I trust this information answers your request. Should you have any further enquiries or queries about this response please do not hesitate to contact me. However, if you are unhappy with the way in which your request has been handled, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to: Sally Brook Shanahan, Director of Corporate Affairs, King's Mill Hospital, Mansfield Road, Sutton in Ashfield, Nottinghamshire, NG17 4JL or email sally.brookshanahan@nhs.net.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the internal review, you can apply to the Information Commissioner's Office, who will consider whether we have complied with our obligations under the Act and can require us to remedy any problems. Generally, the Information Commissioner's Office cannot decide unless you have exhausted the internal review procedure. You can find out more about how to do this, and about the Act in general, on the Information Commissioner's Office website at: <https://ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/official-information/>.

Complaints to the Information Commissioner's Office should be sent to FOI/EIR Complaints Resolution, Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Telephone 0303 1231113, email casework@ico.org.uk.

If you would like this letter or information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call us on 01623 672232 or email sfh-tr.foi.requests@nhs.net.

Yours faithfully

Information Governance Team

All information we have provided is subject to the provisions of the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015. Accordingly, if the information has been made available for re-use under the [Open Government Licence](#) (OGL) a request to re-use is not required, but the licence conditions must be met. You must not re-use any previously unreleased information without having the consent from Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. Should you wish to re-use previously unreleased information then you must make your request in writing. All requests for re-use will be responded to within 20 working days of receipt.