

Our ref: MMcC/jmck/FOI - 482

5th May 2021

By Email: (request-745120-87e98117@whatdotheyknow.com)

Dear Mr McCann

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 – INFORMATION REQUEST

Further to our response dated 19th April 2021 PCR tests, please find enclosed further updated response.

If you are unhappy as to how this request has been handled, you should write to Dr Catherine Weaver, Head of Information Governance, the FOI lead for the Trust. You have the right to seek a review within the Trust in the first instance.

If, after receiving a response, you remain unhappy, you can refer your complaint to the Information Commissioner at The Information Commissioner's office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, SK9 5AF. It is important to note that if you refer any matter to the Information Commissioner, you will need to show evidence of having gone through the Trust's review procedure to try to resolve the matter with the Trust in the first instance.

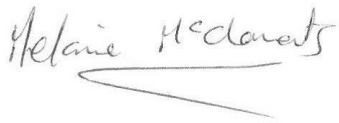
If you have any queries or concerns then please contact Information Governance at the following address:

Southern Health & Social Care Trust
Ferndale
Bannvale Site
10 Moyallen Road
Gilford
BT63 5JX

Tel: 028 37 561458

Email: Foi.Team@Southerntrust.hscni.net

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Melanie McClements". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

MELANIE MCCLEMENTS
DIRECTOR OF ACUTE SERVICES

Enc: Response FOI 482

SOUTHERN HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE TRUST

UPDATED FREEDOM OF INFORMATION RESPONSE 482

1. When using the PCR test how from the total of PCR tests done up until now have resulted in positive cases and have you or any outsourcer tried to culture the positives in a lab?

SHSCT have had 5284 COVID-positive samples, from 4039 unique patients. We have not cultured the positives. We do not know if the Belfast Trust has tried to culture positive samples.

2. Is it true that a positive PCR test does not mean that you have covid-19 and that it can't determine if someone is infectious or not?

False positives can occur and you cannot be definitive about infectivity

3. When did your trust start using the lateral flow test and at what point did the trust start using it more than the PCR test?

The Trust has not been using Lateral Flow Antigen tests on patients

The lateral flow testing (LFT) pilot was a joint partnership initiative with the SHSCT and the PHA. The use of LFT's in the SHSCT commenced on 25/1/2021 and as of the 12/4/2021 there were 656 staff in the trust using LFT's twice weekly. LFT is used for asymptomatic staff testing only and those with a positive result will automatically be referred for a confirmatory PCR test carried out at Trust level. Staff reporting symptoms of COVID 19 are referred for a PCR test. At no point has the number of lateral flow tests been greater than the number of PCR tests.

4. When using the lateral flow test how from the total of lateral flow tests done up until now have resulted in positive cases and have you or any outsourcer tried to culture the positives in a lab?

As above, the Trust has not been using Lateral Flow Antigen tests for diagnosis

There have been no positive LFT's reported in the SHSCT to date. If someone was to report a positive LFT they would need to have this confirmed by a PCR test as per PHA protocol.

5. In the 1 week period from the 28th December 2020 up until the 4th January what test was used in your trust?

A number of different platforms are used. During the week specified all of the tests used were either PCR or isothermal amplification tests. The use of LFT's in the SHSCT only commenced on 25/1/2021 therefore no LFT's would have been used during the 1 week period 28/12/2020 – 4/1/2021.