



21 August 2018

Information Rights & Compliance Team
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Our Ref: FOI 2944

Thank you for your request concerning direct engagement.

Your request has been considered and processed in accordance with the requirements of the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000.

1. Does your organisation use a Direct Engagement scheme?

Yes for medical staff only.

2. If so, who provides it? And when did you start using it?

We use 24/7 Time Limited; they were awarded the contract in September 2015.

3. Did you take external legal advice before entering into it and, if so, from whom did you take external legal advice?

No, we did not seek external legal advice.

4. What has your total locum/temporary staffing spend since you started using the scheme? If you started using the scheme before April 2017 please also state the total locum/temporary staffing spend since April 2017.

	Medical Agency Spend £k
2015/16	1,779
2016/17	1,682
2017/18	1,365

Please note that many other circumstances changed between the two years, unrelated to the use of direct engagement.

5. How does the third party direct engagement facilitator save you money on the agency spend? Please answer in short point form.

The self-billing process ensures that the Trust only pays what it should and removes the opportunity for agencies to over or incorrectly charge. Also if the directly engaged organisation does not need to charge VAT on their services then there is a saving against the agency charge.

6. How much has been paid to the third party direct engagement facilitator thus far? By facilitating the medical staff to work through direct engagement rather than agency.

	Paid to Third Party Engagement Facilitator
2015/16	£6,588
2016/17	£11,847
2017/18	£20,057

7. Was this payment calculated as a percentage of the savings generated by employing the services of the third party direct engagement facilitator? If so, what percentage is this?

The Trust considers the breakdown of payment percentage to be commercially sensitive under Section 43 (2) of the Freedom of Information Act. Information is exempt if disclosure would, or would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of any person, including the public authority holding the information. This is a qualified exemption and therefore subject to the public interest test. We have considered the reasons for and against disclosure below:

Reason in favour of disclosure

There is considerable interest in ensuring the Trust is transparent about its spending of public money at a time when public finances are under considerable scrutiny.

There is some interest in this contract and ensuring that the Trust is getting value for money.

Reason against disclosure

The Trust is obliged to protect its commercial relationships with third parties; they must have confidence that their commercial information is secure when provided to the Trust. The release of this information is likely to prejudice our on-going relationship with the direct engagement facilitator.

We reached the view that, on balance, the public interest is better served by withholding this breakdown under Section 43 (2) of the Freedom of Information Act.

The Trust has released the total cost which we feel satisfies our transparency obligations.

Should you require further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Please find enclosed an information sheet regarding copyright protection and the Trust's complaints procedure in the event that you are not satisfied with the response.

Yours sincerely

Sue Smith

**Sue Smith
Information Rights Officer**

Enc: Copyright Protection and Complaints Procedure Information Leaflet.

If you would like to complete a short survey in relation to your Freedom of Information request please scan the QR code below or click [here](#).

