

23 September 2019

Information Rights & Compliance Team
99 Waverley Road
St Albans
Hertfordshire
AL3 5TL

Tel: 01727 804954
Email: Hpf.foi@nhs.net

Our Ref: FOI/03406

Thank you for your request concerning Interpreting and Translating Services.

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

1. Who is your current provider of interpreting and translation services?

Our interpreting and translation contract runs across providers in our STP (Sustainable Transformation Partnership) i.e. our services in Essex, Bucks, Herts and Norfolk under a Pan Contract.

Currently the provider is (HITS) Herts Interpreting and Translation Service.

Please can you provide financial information relating to the:

2. Total cost of interpreting services in the last 2 years and the number of requests made

We are unable to split interpreting services (including BSL) from translation services, However please see below for the annual spend and numbers for both.

The information you are requesting for 2017/18 is already in the public domain. Please follow this [link](#) to a previously published response¹.

2018/19	Annual Spend	Total Number of Requests
	£54,393	1159

Top language need	Language	Number
1	Arabic	159
2	Polish	107
3	Farsi	90
4	Turkish	87
5	Urdu	78
6	Portuguese	70
7	Bengali	60
8	Romanian	56
9	Tamil	38
10	Albanian	36

The Trust considers the release of the breakdown of hourly cost of Face to Face interpreting cost per hour and cost per minute of telephone interpreting services to be commercially sensitive under Section 43 (2) of the Freedom of Information Act. Information is exempt if

¹ Section 21 – Information is available through other means

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 the contract with its interpretation service providers 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 interpreting service providers.

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

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

3. Total cost of translation services in the last 2 years and the number of requests made.

Please see the answer to question 2.

4. Total cost of BSL interpreting in the last 2 years and the number of requests made

- * Hourly cost of face to face interpreting services
- * Cost per minute of telephone interpreting services
- * Breakdown of the top 10 most popular languages
- * Can you please provide details of your current provider?

Please see the answer to question 2.

Most importantly, can you please confirm based on what quality standards your current provider was awarded the contract i.e.?

5. How they do ensure their quality of for each of the service on this contract in accordance with your contract specifications?

We do not hold this information.³

6. How do they ensure that only qualified interpreters / translators are assigned on jobs?

We do not hold this information.³

² Section 43 – Information that constitutes a trade secret or may prejudice commercial interests.

³ Section 1 (1) Any person making a request for information to a public authority is entitled

(a) to be informed in writing by the public authority whether it holds information of the description specified in the request, and
(b) if that is the case, to have that information communicated to him.

7. How do they approach the successful performance of this Contract in accordance with the contract specifications?

We do not hold this information.³

8. Can we please ask for detailed explanation of their approach in relation to their secure recruitment, ensuring quality, their credentials and security of information?

We do not hold this information³.

9. How many complaints have been logged against the contractor over the past 2 years?

We have not received any official complaints against this contractor.

10. Can you please explain what experience your current provider has in the delivery of this Contract?

We do not hold this information.³

11. Can you please explain the quality of their Translating / Interpreting Staff to deliver this Contract in particularly their:

• Professionalism, competencies and training • Interpreting practice requirements

We do not hold this information.³

8. What systems and processes do they have in place to monitor, evaluate and report on this contract particularly regarding each service procured through the current provider.

We do not hold this information.³

9. What innovative approaches they have in place to: Ensure linguist availability in the geographic areas?

We do not hold this information.³

10. How they do ensure that they have a good understanding of the diverse growing community needs in the region and how they would meet the potential increases in services?

We do not hold this information.³

12. What are your organisation's top 5 KPIs and how they are ensured by the current provider?

There are no KPIs attached to this contract.

13. How do they deal with complaints and what is their complaint procedure?

We do not hold this information.³

14. Please can you provide the name, job title, email address and contact number for the person(s) responsible for awarding any contracts relating to these services and for managing the day to day running of the services.

All our management contact details can be obtained through [Binley's Database of NHS Management](#)¹.

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](#).

