

9 February 2022

Belfast Trust ENT Services

1. **The number of adults who have been referred to adult ENT services in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSCT) with the following conditions in the years 2017, 2019, 2020 and 2021:**
 - A) **Hearing loss**
 - B) **Tinnitus**
 - C) **Vertigo, dizziness and balance problems**

The Trust does not hold data broken down into this level of coding at outpatients. To obtain this data an extensive trawl of patient notes would be required. We estimate that compliance with this request for information would exceed the appropriate costs limit. Under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information 2000, the limit has been specified as £450 and represents the estimated cost of one or more persons spending 18 hours in determining whether we hold the information, locating, retrieving and extracting this information.

The table below shows the total number of referrals received by adult audiology.

Sum of Total Referrals	Referral Year			
	2017	2019	2020	2021
Specialty Description				
AUDIOLOGY (T)	1751	2867	1375	1744
PAEDIATRIC AUDIOLOGY (T)	1717	1413	1065	1095

2. **The number of adults who are on current waiting lists in BHSCT adult ENT services with the following conditions:**
 - A) **Hearing loss**
 - B) **Tinnitus**
 - C) **Vertigo, dizziness and balance problems**

The information requested is not centrally held and an extensive trawl of patient notes would be required. We estimate that compliance with this request for information would exceed the appropriate costs limit. Under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information 2000, the limit has been specified as £450 and represents the estimated cost of one or more persons spending 18 hours in determining whether we hold the information, locating, retrieving and extracting this information.

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3. The waiting times for adults who are on current waiting lists in BHSCT adult ENT services with the following conditions:

- A) Hearing loss**
- B) Tinnitus**
- C) Vertigo, dizziness and balance problems**

The information requested is not centrally held and an extensive trawl of patient notes would be required. We estimate that compliance with this request for information would exceed the appropriate costs limit. Under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information 2000, the limit has been specified as £450 and represents the estimated cost of one or more persons spending 18 hours in determining whether we hold the information, locating, retrieving and extracting this information.

4. The number of children who have been referred to paediatric ENT services in BHSCT with the following conditions in the years 2017, 2019, 2020 and 2021:

- A) Hearing loss**
- B) Tinnitus**
- C) Vertigo, dizziness and balance problems**

The Trust does not hold data broken down into this level of coding at outpatients. To obtain this data an extensive trawl of patient notes would be required. We estimate that compliance with this request for information would exceed the appropriate costs limit. Under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information 2000, the limit has been specified as £450 and represents the estimated cost of one or more persons spending 18 hours in determining whether we hold the information, locating, retrieving and extracting this information.

The table below shows the total number of referrals received by adult audiology.

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Specialty Description				
AUDIOLOGY (T)	1751	2867	1375	1744
PAEDIATRIC AUDIOLOGY (T)	1717	1413	1065	1095

5. The number of children who are on current waiting lists in BHSCT paediatric ENT services with the following conditions:

- A) Hearing loss**
- B) Tinnitus**
- C) Vertigo, dizziness and balance problems**

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The information requested is not centrally held and an extensive trawl of patient notes would be required. We estimate that compliance with this request for information would exceed the appropriate costs limit. Under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information 2000, the limit has been specified as £450 and represents the estimated cost of one or more persons spending 18 hours in determining whether we hold the information, locating, retrieving and extracting this information.

6. The waiting times for children who are on current waiting lists in BHSCT paediatric ENT services with the following conditions:

- A) Hearing loss**
- B) Tinnitus**
- C) Vertigo, dizziness and balance problems**

The information requested is not centrally held and an extensive trawl of patient notes would be required. We estimate that compliance with this request for information would exceed the appropriate costs limit. Under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information 2000, the limit has been specified as £450 and represents the estimated cost of one or more persons spending 18 hours in determining whether we hold the information, locating, retrieving and extracting this information.

7. The number of current:

- A) consultant surgeons specialising in balance and vestibular disorders in permanent posts in the adult BHSCT ENT service: 2**
- B) consultant surgeons specialising in balance and vestibular disorders in permanent posts in the paediatric BHSCT ENT service: None**
- C) consultant surgeons specialising in balance and vestibular disorders in locum posts in the adult BHSCT ENT services: None**
- D) consultant surgeons specialising in balance and vestibular disorders in locum posts in the paediatric BHSCT ENT service: None**
- E) physiotherapists specialising in vestibular physiotherapy in the adult BHSCT ENT service: Not commissioned**
- F) physiotherapists specialising in vestibular physiotherapy in the paediatric BHSCT ENT service: Not commissioned**
- G) audiometrists in the adult BHSCT ENT service: 7.6 WTE**
- H) audiometrists in the paediatric BHSCT ENT service: 2.65 WTE**
- I) hearing therapists in the adult BHSCT ENT service: None. The Trust has employed a clinical psychologist to work collaboratively within the MDT.**
- K) hearing therapists in the paediatric BHSCT ENT service: None**
- L) specialist nurses and/or key workers for patients with vestibular, balance, hearing and tinnitus disorders in the adult BHSCT ENT service: None**
- M) specialist nurses and/or key workers for patients with vestibular, balance, hearing and tinnitus disorders in the paediatric BHSCT ENT service: None**

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8. The number of:

A) consultant surgeons specialising in balance and vestibular disorders in permanent posts in the adult BHSCT ENT service who have qualifications such as a Masters in Audiovestibular Medicine or other specialist postgraduate courses in balance disorders. It is part of surgeon training via a skullbase or otology fellowship. = 2

B) consultant surgeons specialising in balance and vestibular disorders in permanent posts in the paediatric BHSCT ENT service who have qualifications such as a Masters in Audiovestibular Medicine or other specialist postgraduate courses in balance disorders: As above

C) consultant surgeons specialising in balance and vestibular disorders in locum posts in the adult BHSCT ENT services who have qualifications such as a Masters in Audiovestibular Medicine or other specialist postgraduate courses in balance disorders: None

D) consultant surgeons specialising in balance and vestibular disorders in locum posts in the paediatric BHSCT ENT service who have qualifications such as a Masters in Audiovestibular Medicine or other specialist postgraduate courses in balance disorders: None

8. The total number of BHSCT ENT new patient slots available annually for the assessment of patients with balance and vestibular symptoms led by:

A) consultant surgeons specialising in balance and vestibular disorders in permanent posts in the adult BHSCT ENT service

B) consultant surgeons specialising in balance and vestibular disorders in permanent posts in the paediatric BHSCT ENT service

C) consultant surgeons specialising in balance and vestibular disorders in locum posts in the adult BHSCT ENT services

D) consultant surgeons specialising in balance and vestibular disorders in locum posts in the paediatric BHSCT ENT service

E) physiotherapists specialising in vestibular physiotherapy in the adult BHSCT ENT service

F) physiotherapists specialising in vestibular physiotherapy in the paediatric BHSCT ENT service

This information requested is unavailable. Outpatient new slots are allocated on clinical triage and prioritisation rather than condition specific.

9. The total number of BHSCT ENT review patient slots available annually for the follow up of patients with balance and vestibular symptoms led by:

A) consultant surgeons specialising in balance and vestibular disorders in permanent posts in the adult BHSCT ENT service

B) consultant surgeons specialising in balance and vestibular disorders in permanent posts in the paediatric BHSCT ENT service

C) consultant surgeons specialising in balance and vestibular disorders in locum posts in the adult BHSCT ENT services

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- D) consultant surgeons specialising in balance and vestibular disorders in locum posts in the paediatric BHSCT ENT service**
- E) physiotherapists specialising in vestibular physiotherapy in the adult BHSCT ENT service**
- F) physiotherapists specialising in vestibular physiotherapy in the paediatric BHSCT ENT service**

The information requested is unavailable. Outpatient new slots are allocated on clinical prioritisation rather than condition specific.

10. The total number of BHSCT ENT new patient slots available annually for :

- A) the assessment and management of adult patients with tinnitus**
- B) the assessment and management of paediatric patients with tinnitus**
- B) the assessment and management of adult patients with hearing loss**
- D) the assessment and management of paediatric patients with hearing loss**

This information requested is unavailable. Outpatient new slots are allocated on clinical triage and prioritisation rather than condition specific.

11. The total number of BHSCT ENT review patient slots available annually for:

- A) the assessment and management of adult patients with tinnitus**
- B) the assessment and management of paediatric patients with tinnitus**
- B) the assessment and management of adult patients with hearing loss**
- D) the assessment and management of paediatric patients with hearing loss**

The information requested is unavailable. Outpatient new slots are allocated on clinical prioritisation rather than condition specific.

12. The availability or non-availability of the following BHSCT ENT audiology and vestibular tests for A) adults and B) children:

- (1) Caloric testing:** A) Not available
- (2) video head impulse testing (vHIT):** A) Available
- (3) Electronystagmography (ENG):** A) Not available
- (4) Videonystagmography (VNG):** A) Not available
- (5) Rotation tests - computerised rotatory chair, auto head rotation:** A) Not available
- (6) Vestibular evoked myogenic potential (VEMP):** CVemps only, not OVemps
- (7) Computerised Dynamic Posturography (CDP):** A) Not available
- (8) Otoacoustic emissions (OAE):** A) Available
- (9) Electrocochleography (ECOG):** A) Not available
- (10) Auditory brainstem response (ABR):** A) Available But not CERA
Cortical evoked response audiometry

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13. The current mean waiting time and range of waiting times to vestibular rehabilitation physiotherapy for A) adults and B) children diagnosed with balance and vestibular disorders who have been referred for:

- (1) initial assessment:** The information requested is not held
- (2) management:** The information requested is not held

14. Are advanced vestibular physiotherapy rehabilitation techniques available for A) adults B) children?

- (1) Is there availability of virtual reality vestibular rehabilitation for patients with vestibular disorders?** No
- (2) Is there availability of optokinetic stimulation therapy?** No

15. Are there referral guidelines and care pathways for adult and paediatric patients with (1) hearing loss, (2) tinnitus and (3) balance and vestibular disorders:

A) From GP to BHSCT ENT, audiology and hearing therapy services?:

Audiology for 1) and 2), 3) incorporated within ENT referrals

B) From GP to BHSCT vestibular physiotherapy services for assessment and management of suspected balance disorders?: None

C) From secondary care services to BHSCT ENT, audiology and hearing therapy services?: Hearing Therapy services no longer available, Audiology if within Trust postcode for 1) & 2) , Yes for ENT

D) From secondary care services to BHSCT vestibular physiotherapy services for the assessment and management of suspected balance disorders?: N/A

E) For the management of patients diagnosed with specific vestibular disorders, for example BPPV, Ménière's Disease and Vestibular Migraine?: Clinical guidelines exist

16. Are direct referrals possible for A) adults and B) children from:

- (1) GP to BHSCT audiology?:** Yes
- (2) GP to BHSCT vestibular physiotherapy services?:** No
- (3) GP to BHSCT hearing therapists?:** No

17. What strategies are employed to achieve required standards of care for patients who do not have access to the necessary specialist tests or specialist care for the diagnosis and management of hearing loss, tinnitus and balance disorders due to lack of technical or human resource in the afore named BHSCT services?: (1) Referral to another NI Trust?

(2) Extracontractual referral (ECR) to another UK Health Trust?

(3) ECR to an international Health service

(4) Referral to private sector audio-vestibular or neuro-otology services?

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- (5) Referral to private sector vestibular physiotherapy services?**
- (6) Referral to private sector hearing therapy services?**
- (7) Other - please specify**

None of the above

18. With relation to Question 14, how many patients in the years in the years 2017, 2019, 2020 and 2021 have:

- (1) Been referred to another NI Trust?: Nil**
- (2) Had ECR to another UK Health Trust?: Nil**
- (3) Had ECR to an International Health service?: Nil**
- (4) Were referred to private sector audio-vestibular or neuro-otology services?: Nil**
- (5) Were referred to private sector vestibular physiotherapy services?: Nil**
- (6) Were referred to private sector hearing therapy services?: Nil**
- (7) Other - please specify**