

10 February 2023

Homicide

Question:

Under FOI legislation, please can you tell me the number of your mental health patients that have committed a homicide between the calendar years 2018 and 2022?

By 'homicide' I mean murder, manslaughter, infanticide, or causing death by dangerous driving. By 'patient' I mean both community and in-patients who are either current patients or who have had contact with the Trust within six months of the offence.

I am not requesting any personal data such as age/gender or even a breakdown of occurrence by month or year, just an overall number from your Trust for those calendar years so there should be no data protection or identification issues.

Response:

Belfast Trust can confirm that since 2018, there have been less than 5 'patients' who have 'committed homicide'. Mental Health services have interpreted 'committed' as having been convicted / sentenced within the judicial system and not those currently awaiting trial.

We are unable to provide an exact number. Due to the nature of this request and the media interest around incidents of this nature there is the possibility of identification of individuals involved if exact numbers are provided.

In reaching this decision, Belfast Trust has also taken into consideration the small geographical area that Belfast Trust serves.

Exact figures are withheld under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act. To provide this information could make patients personally identifiable. Disclosure would constitute a breach of the principles of the General Data Protection Regulation 2018.