

29 November 2023

River House Residential Care Home Belfast

I wish to obtain information about River House Residential Care Home, Belfast.

NOTE: Belfast Trust is unable to provide information prior to 2023, as to do so would require an internal trawl of records, which would take more than 18 hours to complete.

Belfast Trust considers that the cost of retrieving the information would be above the 'Appropriate Limit', as defined by the Freedom of Information Act under Section 12. Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit. The limit has been specified as £450 for public authorities such as Belfast Trust. This represents the cost of one or more persons spending 18 hours in determining whether we hold the information, locating, retrieving and extracting this information.

The Trust can give assurances regarding statistics for 2023 only.

1. How many adult safeguarding referrals at River House Residential Care Home remain under investigation?

At this time, <5 investigations remain open.

Use of <5 (less than five): We are unable to provide an exact figure - exempt from release under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act, as this could make individuals personally identifiable. Disclosure would constitute a breach of the principles of the General Data Protection Regulation 2018.

2. How many adult safeguarding referrals at River House since January 2020?

From the Gateway model was established in January 2023, there have been a total of 13.

As indicated above, information prior to January 2023 cannot be provided without a manual trawl of individual records which would take more than 18 hours to complete. Belfast Trust considers that the cost of retrieving the information would be above the 'Appropriate Limit', as defined by the Freedom of Information Act under Section 12.

3. How many adult safeguarding referrals at River House since January 2020 were the subject of an investigation?

There were <5 referrals subject to investigation since January 2023. As above, we are unable to provide an exact figures as this information is exempt from release under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act.

29 November 2023

4. How many substantiated allegations of abuse of a vulnerable adult was there at River House for each year 2020-2023?

The electronic referral system was not used until January 2023 and so to provide this information would require a manual trawl of records, which would take more than 18 hours to complete. Again, the Trust considers that the cost of retrieving the information would be above the 'Appropriate Limit'.

2021/22 – Belfast Trust's electronic system does not allow for substantiated / unsubstantiated to be recorded and so to provide this information would require a manual trawl of records, which would take more than 18 hours to complete. Again, the Trust considers that the cost of retrieving the information would be above the 'Appropriate Limit'.

2023 – <5 are recorded on the electronic recording system. Again, the exact figure cannot be provided as the information is exempt from release under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act, as this could make individuals personally identifiable.

• Where would the Chief Executive of the Trust source the information (above) urgently?

The Chief Executive would be able to source this information from the Intellectual Disability Collective Leadership Team, who would liaise directly with the Adult Safeguarding Team.

5. How does the Trust communicate with residents and relatives at River House about Adverse Incidents?

The current procedure for reporting and follow-up of an Adverse Incident indicates the investigation teams should provide an opportunity for the service user / relative / carers to contribute to the investigation, as necessary. The level of involvement clearly depends on the nature of the incident and the service users / relatives / carers willingness to be involved.

Teams involved in the investigation of an Adverse Incident should ensure sensitivity to the needs of the service user / relatives / carers involved in the incident and agree appropriate communication arrangements.

Guidance refers to the principles of being open with service users, carers and families and specifically highlights the various stages of engagement from recognition that an Adverse Incident has occurred, to the conclusion of the process.

29 November 2023

6. How many adult safeguarding case strategy discussions took place in relation to River House in 2022 and 2023?

Less than 5 strategy discussions took place. Again, the exact figure cannot be provided as the information is exempt from release under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act.

- **How many case strategy discussions were the RQIA invited to and how many did the RQIA attend?**

Information not held.

7. Confirm all documentation that the Trust sends to RQIA during an adult safeguarding process at River House

RQIA are provided with any reports relevant to meetings and they are alerted to incidents of abuse when they occur.

8. Who attends the reviews of adult safeguarding investigations (stage 5)?

Adult Safeguarding investigations are attended by professionals involved in the patient's care, relevant managers, members of the Adult Safeguarding Team and where appropriate, services users and carers.

- **How do vulnerable adults and relatives get invited to adult safeguarding investigation review meetings (stage 5)?**

Invitations will be sent if it is felt to be appropriate. Communication is via email, letter, telephone call or a combination of these.

9. How many allegations of abuse does there need to be in any one calendar year before the Trust would take action at a care home like River House?

All allegations of abuse are taken seriously and are screened, investigated and actioned as deemed appropriate, on a case-by-case basis.

Escalation and action from Belfast Trust, who commission a care home, is not solely based on the number of concerns.

Any action and escalation is in line with the Commissioned Services governance and assurance structure.

10. How many Performance Notices have the Trust issued at River House?

No performance reports have been issued.