12 June 2025

Ophthalmology IT Systems

Ophthalmology Department & IT Record System	
1. Does your Trust have an ophthalmology department and/or provide ophthalmology clinics?	YES
2. If so, what is the name of the principal IT record system used to document results from patient consultations within ophthalmology?	Non-disclosure - as per Section 31
Imaging Capabilities & System Integration	
3. Does the principal IT system allow clinicians to view images from scans conducted during a clinic visit?	Non-disclosure - as per Section 31
4. Are there any types of medical images that cannot be imported into this principal IT system? If so:	Non-disclosure - as per Section 31
• What is the name of the IT programme used by clinicians to view these images?	Non-disclosure - as per Section 31
• What is the name of the scan/modality that generates these images?	Non-disclosure - as per Section 31
Data Integration with National Systems	
5. Does the principal IT system integrate with the NHS Spine or other national patient record systems (e.g., OpenEyes, Medisoft, Epic)?	Non-disclosure - as per Section 31
6. Does the system support the exchange of structured data with other NHS Trusts or external healthcare providers?	Non-disclosure - as per Section 31
Patient Access & Communication	
7. Does the system allow patients to access their ophthalmology records, including images, via the NHS App or another patient portal?	Non-disclosure - as per Section 31
8. Are there any restrictions on how imaging data can be shared with patients and external providers?	Non-disclosure - as per Section 31
Image Storage & Viewing Capabilities	
9. What is the storage capacity and retention policy for ophthalmology-related imaging within the IT system?	Non-disclosure - as per Section 31
10. If images are not viewable within the principal IT system, does the Trust use a separate PACS (Picture Archiving and Communication System) for ophthalmology imaging?	Non-disclosure - as per Section 31
Future IT Developments & Interoperability	
11. Is the Trust planning any upgrades or changes to its ophthalmology IT infrastructure in the next five years?	Non-disclosure - as per Section 31
12. Are there known interoperability challenges that affect the transfer of ophthalmology data within the Trust or between NHS organizations?	Non-disclosure - as per Section 31

The information requested in this FOI request is exempt from release under Section 31 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

This is a qualified exemption and so a Public Interest Test was carried out to decide if the information should be released or not. Having weighed up the factors for and against release, it was decided to withhold this information because the disclosure of such information would:

a) Leave Belfast Trust, patients, clients & staff more vulnerable to crime

b) Pose a significant threat to the integrity & operation of the digital systems on which the day-to-day business of the Trust relies

Section 31 – Law Enforcement Section

Section 31(1)(a) states that information is exempt if its disclosure is likely to prejudice the prevention or detection of crime. ICO guidance states that this can be used to protect information on a public authority's systems which would make it more vulnerable to crime. It can be used by a public authority that has no law enforcement function:

- To protect the work of one that does

- To withhold information that would make anyone, including the public authority itself, more vulnerable to crime

Disclosure of the requested information would leave the Belfast Trusts digital infrastructure at significant risk of cyber security attack. This would compromise the Belfast Trusts ability to provide Health & Care Services and carry on business-as usual should the digital systems be compromised.