Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
caring supporting improving together

FOI/34653

3 September 2025

Digital Maturity

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I am requesting the following information regarding your organisation's digital maturity.

Shared Care Record: **For your main Shared Care Record (or equivalent electronic shared patient record), please state which of the following partners currently contribute data to it (not just view it):**	
• **Primary Care (GPs)**	Yes
• **Acute Trusts (Hospitals)**	Yes
• **Community Health Services**	Yes
• **Mental Health Services**	Yes
• **Social Care (Local Authority)**	No

Artificial Intelligence (AI): **Do you have a formal, board approved governance framework for using Artificial Intelligence (AI)?**	*Information withheld on the basis of cybersecurity threat
If yes, please list any AI applications currently in operational use.	*Information withheld on the basis of cybersecurity threat

Patient-Facing Digital Services: **Through your main patient-facing app or portal, which of the following functions are available? (Please answer Yes/No for each):**	
• **Booking/managing appointments**	Information on Encompass Patient Portal is already available online at https://belfasttrust.hscni.net/about/encompass/my-care-your-patient-portal/ *Any other information is withheld on basis of cyber security.
• **Ordering repeat prescriptions**	
• **Viewing GP health record**	
• **Viewing hospital letters/results**	
• **Secure messaging with a clinical team**	
• **Accessing a personalised care plan**	
• **Contributing their own data (e.g., via remote monitoring)**	

Digital Strategy: **Have you approved a digital and data strategy for the 2025-2027 period that aligns with your nation's overarching digital health strategy?**	The Digital Health and Care NI (DHCNI) Digital Strategy 2022-2030 is leading digital transformation across healthcare in Northern Ireland to improve health and social care outcomes.

	https://dhcni.hscni.net/digital-strategy/overview/ Belfast Trust Digital Strategy 2020-25 is attached in a separate document (redacted version, supporting exemptions on basis of cyber security).

Leadership Roles: **Please provide the approximate Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) for the following roles**:	
1. **Chief Information Officer (CIO) / Chief Digital & Information Officer (CDIO)**	1 FTE / 0 FTE Although the organisation does not have a defined CDIO role, digital leadership is distributed among other senior roles and digital governance is embedded in existing frameworks
2. **Chief Clinical Information Officer (CCIO) / Chief Nursing Information Officer (CNIO)**	1 FTE / 1 FTE
3. **Director/Head of Digital Transformation or Strategy**	1 FTE
4. **Director/Head of Data or Analytics**	1 FTE
5. **Director/Head of System Integration or Partnerships**	1 FTE
6. **Data Scientist**	Withheld
7. **AI Specialist / AI Engineer**	Withheld
8. **User Experience (UX) Designer / Researcher**	Withheld

*All of this information is exempt from release under Section 31(1)(a) - Law Enforcement, Section 38 – Health and Safety and Section 43 – Commercial Interests.

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.

Section 38 – Health & Safety states that information is exempt if its disclosure could lead to the physical or mental harm of, or endanger the safety of, individuals. Disclosure of the requested information would leave the Belfast Trusts digital infrastructure at significant risk of cyber security attack. A cyber-security attack may lead to the placing of sensitive health & social care information into the public domain and, as such, the Trust believes there is a link between the risk of endangerment for data subjects and the disclosure of the requested information. There would likely be a substantial detrimental effect on the physical or mental health of patients, clients, staff or their families should the requested information be released.

Section 43(2) states that information is exempt if its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the public authority holding it). Disclosure of the requested information would leave Belfast Trusts digital infrastructure at significant risk of cyber security attack. This would compromise Belfast Trust's ability to provide Health and Care Services and carry on business-as-usual should the digital systems be compromised.

These exemptions are Qualified Exemptions and are therefore subject to a Public Interest Test (PIT).

I can confirm that we have now carried out a PIT and the outcome is to maintain the exemptions and withhold the information from release.