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Ultrasound Equipment

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I would like to request the following information:

A list of all ultrasound equipment currently owned or used by the Trust. Please include:

- **Manufacturer**
- **Model**
- **Year of installation**
- **Department where each machine is located**

As Ultrasound devices would be considered connected medical devices and many integrate with essential healthcare systems:

1. *Sharing information about **Make, Model and date of installation** could provide an insight to attackers which could be used to compromise network connectivity, exploit known weaknesses or vulnerabilities on the devices or software, or target specific device types, resulting in significant disruption.
2. *Sharing **device locations** would expand the pool of potential attackers, and provide attackers with target maps, making it easier to plan attacks.

Cybersecurity requires layered defences. Public disclosure of device details would undermine a primary layer of defence (device level security) and therefore we would recommend withholding information to this request in its entirety on the basis of cybersecurity threat.

*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

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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.

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