

08 January 2026

## **MRI scanning capacity, waiting lists, operations, and associated costs held by Belfast Health and Social Care Trust**

- 1. Patient Waiting Times (As of December 2025) What are the total number of patients currently waiting for a routine or urgent-suspected-cancer MRI scan, broken down by the following waiting time periods from referral date to scan date: a) Under 6 weeks b) 6 to under 8 weeks c) Over 8 weeks?**

Fulfilling this request would require more than take more than 18 hours. Producing the exact information requested would involve reviewing the clinical history of all MRI referrals. This would require manual interrogation of data and a significant number of staff hours exceeding the cost limit set out in the Freedom of Information Act.

We have therefore provided an overview of all MRI referrals, broken down by the requested waiting times periods.

	Under 6 Weeks	6-9 Weeks	Over 9 Weeks
Routine	1197	482	2155
	Under 6 Weeks	6-9 Weeks	Over 9 Weeks
Urgent	709	74	61
	Under 6 Weeks	6-9 Weeks	Over 9 Weeks
Red Flag	5	0	0

- 2. Urgent Referral Waiting Times (Last Quarter) what was the average and maximum waiting time (in days) for an urgent referral for an MRI scan for the last full quarter (i.e. July 2025 – September 2025)?**

Average urgent waiting times is 105 days  
 Maximum urgent waiting time is 168 days

- 3. Scanner Operation and Downtime (Last 12 Months) for the last 12 months (e.g. December 2024 – November 2025): a) What was the average daily operational rate (in hours) for each fixed NHS MRI scanner managed by the Health Board? b) What was the total unplanned downtime (in days) for each fixed NHS MRI scanner due to maintenance, repair, or breakdown?**

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**3(a)** the average daily operational rate (in hours) for each scanner would be difficult to quantify due to combination of scheduled operational hours and out of hours on call activity performed.

To undertake this exercise would necessitate a manual interrogation of data which would involve a significant number of hours. This would exceed the costs limit specified in the FOI act.

We estimate that compliance with this (element of the) request for information would exceed the appropriate costs limit. Under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information 2000, the limit has been specified as £450 and represents the estimated cost of one or more persons spending 18 hours in determining whether we hold the information, locating, retrieving and extracting this information.

**3(b)** this information is not currently centrally held; the service have undertaken a process to monitor and capture this centrally but there is no quantifiable data at present.

To undertake this exercise would necessitate a manual interrogation of data which would involve a significant number of hours. This would exceed the costs limit specified in the FOI act.

We estimate that compliance with this (element of the) request for information would exceed the appropriate costs limit. Under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information 2000, the limit has been specified as £450 and represents the estimated cost of one or more persons spending 18 hours in determining whether we hold the information, locating, retrieving and extracting this information.

**4. MRI Scanner Asset List (Current) Please provide a list of all operational MRI scanners currently managed by the Health Board, including a) The model name/number b) The year of purchase (or commissioning date) c) The date of installation.**

<b>Manufacturer</b>	<b>Equipment Model</b>	<b>Model Number</b>	<b>Year of Purchase</b>	<b>Date of installation</b>
Siemens	Sola Fit 1.5T	141285	2017(2025)	2025
GE	1.5T Optima 450W	012165S498	2015	2015
GE	1.5T Signa Artist	10215652	2024	2024
Siemens	Magnetom Avanto 1.5T	26222	2007	2007
Siemens	Aera 1.5T	141732	2019	2019
Siemens	Lumina 3T	196205	2019	2019
Philips	Ingenia 1.5T	64635753	2015	2015
Philips	Ingenia 3.0T	71534	2016	2016

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Philips	Ingenia Ambition X .15T	47310	2021	2021
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**Average Cost of Scan (Last Financial Year) what was the average Health Board cost for performing a single MRI scan for the last complete financial year (2024/25)? Please specify the key cost components included in this figure (e.g., staff, maintenance, consumables, and depreciation).**

£268 per MRI scan – this would exclude depreciation but be inclusive of staff, maintenance, consumables.

**6. Outsourcing Costs (Last Financial Year) What was the total annual cost for the Health Board on outsourcing MRI scans to private providers in the last complete financial year (2024/25)?**

The total cost for outsourcing provision of MRI's was £3,609,778