

10 February 2026

Homecare Needs Assessments and Brokerage Activity

Request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 relating to the assessment and allocation of domiciliary (homecare) services within your Trust.

We represent independent providers delivering regulated homecare services across Northern Ireland. As part of our ongoing work to understand demand, capacity and access to care at system level, we are seeking high-level information on the flow of homecare needs assessments and subsequent outcomes.

For the 12-month period from 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025, we would be grateful if you could provide the following:

- 1. The number of homecare / domiciliary care needs assessments completed, broken down by month.**

Belfast Trust are unable to provide the total number of assessments completed for domiciliary care as this would require a manual trawl of records. 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.

- 2. For those assessments completed in each month, the number and percentage of individuals who were assessed as eligible for a homecare package, and the number and percentage who were assessed as not eligible.**

Table 1 provides the total number of individuals who were assessed as eligible for a homecare/domiciliary care package. Please note this includes new home care/domiciliary care packages but also includes service users who have an existing home care/domiciliary package but need an increase.

Belfast Trust are unable to provide the percentage of individuals who are assessed as eligible for home care/domiciliary care as we are unable to provide the total number of assessments completed for homecare/domiciliary (as per response to Question1)

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Table 1 - Number of individuals who were assessed as eligible for a homecare package

Month	Number of requests to Brokerage
Jan-25	443
Feb-25	413
Mar-25	415
Apr-25	423
May-25	422
Jun-25	454
Jul-25	498
Aug-25	442
Sep-25	455
Oct-25	462
Nov-25	465
Dec-25	416

3. Of those individuals assessed as eligible in each month, the number and percentage whose cases were referred to brokerage for the sourcing of a homecare package.

See response to Question 2. 100% of people eligible have been referred through to Brokerage

4. To support consistency of interpretation, we would also appreciate confirmation of the Trust’s operational definitions of:

- **“Homecare needs assessment”**
- **“Eligible for a homecare package”**
- **“Brokerage referral”**

There is no specific stand alone to assessment solely for Home care needs assessment.

Once referral is received an assessment of need is undertaken by a professional such as a social worker, occupational therapist or nurse to assess an individual's need for homecare at home.

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This assessment is undertaken face to face and looks at an individual's physical health, mobility, daily routine, mental well-being, and environmental safety and their carers.

Key Aspects of an Assessment include:

- **Daily Living Tasks:** Evaluation of ability to wash, dress, eat, prepare food, and manage toilet needs.
- **Mobility & Safety:** Assessment of movement in/out of the home, fall risks, and home safety.
- **Health & Medication:** Review of medical conditions, medication management, and, if necessary, cognitive abilities like memory.
- **Social & Emotional Well-being:** Inclusion of mental health, companionship needs, and social participation.
- **Support Network:** Consideration of existing care, family involvement, and the carer's own needs.

One of the outcomes of assessment maybe that a person would benefit for a period of Reablement or qualifies for home care services. Other options will also be considered to ensure service users needs are met.

- **Eligible for a Homecare package** – *service users who meet the requirement of critical or substantial needs as per the Care Management Circular 2010.*
- **Brokerage Referral** *is when a request for either a new package or an increase in a current package is sent through to the Brokerage service and this is placed on the Yarra system which all Belfast Trust Providers have access to.*

The Belfast Trust have a small number of block contracts with individual providers to assist discharge from hospital. These do not go through the Brokerage service.