

NEWSLETTER

For Elected Representatives

Body Worn Camera Pilot

Did you know, we have launched a public consultation regarding a proposal to pilot the use of Body-Worn Cameras (BWCs) in our Adult Emergency Departments at the Royal Victoria Hospital and the Mater Hospital. The pilot will run for six months.

Between 2019 and 2024 there were 26,288 incidents of physical and verbal abuse against Belfast Trust staff.

We believe these Body-Worn Cameras (BWCs) will help reduce these incidents.



This proposal is in response to those unacceptably high and increasing levels of violence, aggression and abuse.

Our aim is to deter, de-escalate and document abusive behaviour and to create a safer environment for staff, patients, service users, carers and visitors.

Two public engagement sessions are planned; FOR:

- Wednesday 25th February 2026, 6-8pm (online)
- Wednesday 15th April 2026, 2-4pm at the Arches Wellbeing & Treatment Centre

A Registration Link for the Public Engagement Session is available here:
[Belfast Trust Body Worn Cameras Consultation – public engagement sessions](#)

This consultation is running from 23rd January until 17th April



Winter Pressures

Winter is an extremely busy time in our Hospitals and we would ask that your constituents work with us during this time to help support the discharge of their relatives from hospital when they are medically fit. It helps us to:



Free up beds for those who need them most



Ensure the sickest patients get the care they need



Prevent very sick patients waiting too long in ED



Children's Symptom Checker

We know it's a difficult time when children are feeling unwell. Your constituents can use our symptom checker below to gain a better understanding of what might be happening and where to get treatment.

This helps to ensure children receive the most appropriate care in the right place, at the right time, from the most appropriate team.

[To find out more, click here](#)

DID YOU KNOW?

Almost 20,000 people checked out our Children's Symptom Checker in December alone!

HSC Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
caring supporting improving together

HSC Health and Social Care

PHONE FIRST

Before going to Emergency Department at the Royal Victoria Hospital, Mater Infirmorum Hospital or Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children you should **PHONE FIRST**

028 9615 9444

Operating from 8am to 6pm
Monday to Friday
excluding bank holidays



FOR EMERGENCIES - 999

Including: stroke, heart attack, loss of consciousness, breathing difficulties, severe bleeding or major trauma

ALWAYS CALL 999 IMMEDIATELY

Phone First is a telephone service for any of your constituents who are unwell and considering travelling to an Emergency Department (ED) at the Royal Victoria Hospital, Mater Infirmorum Hospital or Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children.

When your constituent makes a call, they will be assessed on the phone by a healthcare professional and given advice and, if required, directed to the most appropriate urgent or community service to meet their treatment or care needs.

This could include direction to attend an ED, an Urgent Care Centre, a Minor Injuries Unit or being redirected to a GP, Pharmacist or other service. We are learning all the time to improve our service and from feedback, 97% of patients who used the service stated they were happy and would use Phone First again.

Please call 028 9615 9444 to be assessed by phone before being advised of the appropriate next steps. If you are experiencing a life threatening injury please call 999 immediately.

PUBLIC LIAISON SERVICE

Tel: (028) 9504 5888
Email: PublicLiaison@BelfastTrust.hscni.net





Remember:



Public Liaison are first point of contact for Elected Representatives

We are here to assist you with any queries you may have, including enquiries on behalf of your constituents.

Send all enquiries directly to us by emailing:
PublicLiaison@belfasttrust.hscni.net

To help us answer your queries, we need an up to date signed consent form. Please get in touch with us if you require a blank copy of our consent form.

Our responses will never include your constituents name, address or any other patient identifiers. We remove this to prevent the potential of any data breaches. We do however include an ID number and it's important you keep a record of this should you need to come back to us about a particular case.

We always do our best to provide your with a response as quickly as possible and appreciate your patience should this take a little longer than usual.

Consent

- The consent form must be signed by your constituent, or their legal guardian
- Consent forms are valid for 6 months from the date signed. After this we require an updated form to ensure consent is maintained
- Consent forms must be physically signed. We do not accept digital signatures

HSC Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

CONSENT FORM

Enquiry to the Trust by Elected Representatives

Full name of service user: _____ (print name)

Address: _____

Telephone number: _____

Date of birth: _____

Hospital/Facility/Service: _____

I hereby authorise: _____ (print name of elected representative)
to act on my behalf and to receive any and all such information as may be relevant to the enquiry.
This will involve disclosing confidential or personal information on me, my care and my circumstances.

Signed: _____ (by service user)

Date: _____

Where the service user does not have capacity to consent, I am the appropriate person to act as their representative.

Appropriate person's name: _____ (print name)

Appropriate person's signature: _____

Relationship to service user: _____

Reason why the service user does not have capacity to consent themselves. Please enclose supporting evidence (where applicable): _____

Date: _____

Please return your enquiry, together with this consent form, by post or email to:
Public Liaison Service, Corporate Communications, Nine 1/16, Knockrahan Healthcare Park, Sanfield Road, Belfast, BT8 5BH Email: PublicLiaison@belfasttrust.hscni.net Tel: (028) 9504 5888

