

16 June 2026

Brain Tumour Resections

1. Does your Trust perform neurosurgical brain tumour surgery or biopsy on-site?

Yes

2. For patients undergoing brain tumour surgery or biopsy under your Trust's care, does the usual clinical pathway provide access to facilities that place brain tumour tissue into a fresh-frozen state within at least 30 minutes of excision?

Yes

3. If Yes, is this access:
- a) On-site within your Trust - YES
 - b) Off-site/external
 - c) Both

4. If off-site/external, please name the organisation or type of facility used.

N/A

5. For each year, approximately how many patients underwent surgery or biopsy for a brain tumour / brain cancer at your Trust?

The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust holds the following information in relation to patients with a confirmed cancer diagnosis, recorded in line with Northern Ireland cancer tracking guidance, who underwent surgery as their first definitive treatment for brain tumours:

- 2024: 41 patients
- 2025: 55 patients

This information is derived from cancer tracking datasets and is limited to cases meeting regional reporting criteria. It does not represent all patients who may have undergone brain tumour surgery or biopsy, as procedures relating to non-cancer diagnoses or cases not captured within cancer tracking systems are excluded.

16 June 2026

Under Section 16 of the Act (duty to provide advice and assistance), the Trust advises that a complete response to this question, including all patients undergoing brain tumour surgery or biopsy irrespective of diagnosis, is not held in a single, centrally recorded dataset. To provide a fully comprehensive response would require manual review of individual patient records and may exceed the appropriate cost limit set out under Section 12 of the Act.

6. For each year, approximately how many brain tumour tissue specimens were handled by your pathology service?

We are only able to provide the data for 2024, other years are not held centrally and would take over 18 hours to locate, retrieve and provide. Under section 12 of the FOI Act is not possible to provide any further information.

2024	CASES
HGG	78
LGG	18
Ependymoma hg	2
Ependymoma lg	2
Spinal ependymoma lg	8
Embryonal	2
Pituitary (adenoma)	11
Acoustics	18
Schwannoma	8
Glioneural	2
Neurofibroma	1
Crangiopharyngioma	2
Cranial meningioma	54
Spinal meningioma	8
Neuroepithelial tumour	1
Choroid plexus papilloma	2
Metastatic lesions (including tumours at clivus)	22
Lymphoma	8
Other tumours e.g. teratoma, haemangioma, haemangioblastoma, embryonal rhabdosarcoma, solitary fibrous tumour, osteoma, chordoma etc	16
Non-tumour	32
TOTAL	295

16 June 2026

7. For each year, how many of these specimens were fresh-frozen:
a) within any time frame?

Year	No of fresh frozen samples	Average time to freezing (mins)
2023	100	26
2024	81	21
2025	75	23

- b) within 30 minutes?

100%