

24 September 2026

Orthopaedic Walking Boots & Immobilisation Devices

I am writing under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (or the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Freedom of Information legislation applicable in Northern Ireland where relevant) to request the following information regarding orthopaedic immobilisation devices supplied by your Trust. *Please provide information for the most recent complete financial year available.*

1. Annual Issue Volumes

Please state the total number of the following items issued to patients:

- CAM / Walker Boots
- Aircast Boots
- ROM Knee Braces
- Knee Immobilisers
- Ankle Braces
- Wrist Splints
- Shoulder Immobilisers / Slings
- Any other orthopaedic immobilisation devices supplied by your Trust.

If exact figures are unavailable, please provide the closest available estimate.

Allied Health Professions

Occupational Therapy: Occupational Therapy are only involved in the provision of wrist splints. The service does not hold data centrally in regard to custom made splints or those considered to be “off the shelf”.

To locate the information would involve a manual trawl of individual patient records, which would require more than 18 hours work to complete.

Belfast Trust considers that the cost of retrieving the information would be above the ‘Appropriate Limit’, as defined by the Freedom of Information Act under Section 12. Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit. The limit has been specified as £450 for public authorities such as Belfast Trust. This represents the cost of one or more persons spending 18 hours in determining whether we hold the information, locating, retrieving and extracting this information.

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Physiotherapy: These devices are usually issued at inpatient / orthopaedic clinics; if the Physiotherapy service needs one, they contact the Orthopaedic Appliance Office. Physiotherapy supply a small number of devices directly to the patient as outlined below:

- | | |
|--|----|
| • Ankle Braces | 1 |
| • Wrist Splints | 18 |
| • Any other orthopaedic immobilisation devices
supplied by your Trust: Thumb Spicas | 18 |

Trauma, Orthopaedics & Fractures

Information to respond to this element of the request is not held centrally. To locate the information would involve a manual trawl of individual patient records, which would require more than 18 hours work to complete.

Belfast Trust considers that the cost of retrieving the information would be above the 'Appropriate Limit', as defined by the Freedom of Information Act under Section 12.

Mater / Unscheduled Care & Emergency Department

Belfast Trust is unable to provide this information. The Procurement and Logistics Service (PALS) may be able to assist. You may wish to redirect this question to them at the HSC Business Services Organisation (BSO) - Email: FOI.BSO@hscni.net

2. Annual Expenditure

Please provide the total annual expenditure on:

- **Walking Boots**
- **Orthopaedic Braces**
- **Immobilisation Devices**

If available, please provide expenditure by product category.

Allied Health Professions

The Allied Health Professions do not hold information on spend.

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Trauma, Orthopaedics & Fractures

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Mater / Unscheduled Care & Emergency Department

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3. Manufacturers & Suppliers

Please list the principal manufacturers or suppliers used by your Trust for these products.

Allied Health Professions

Occupational Therapy:

Suppliers for both off the shelf and bespoke splints include;

- Neurotech
- Allard
- Patterson Medical
- Performance Health
- Promedics
- Actimove
- Orf

Physiotherapy:

Ebrington Medical – Supply Wrist Splints
Promedics – Thumb Spicas
Vivomed – Ankle brace

Trauma, Orthopaedics & Fractures

Belfast Trust is unable to provide this information.

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Mater / Unscheduled Care & Emergency Department

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4. Product Reuse

Does your Trust currently:

- **Reuse any orthopaedic walking boots?**
- **Reuse any braces or splints?**
- **Operate any refurbishment programme?**

If yes, please briefly describe the process.

Allied Health Professions

All items are single use only and cannot be reused.

Trauma & Orthopaedics and Fractures

All items are single use only and cannot be reused.

Mater / Unscheduled Care & Emergency Department

All items are single use only and cannot be reused.

5. Patient Returns

Are patients requested to return any of these devices after treatment?

Allied Health Professions

No

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Trauma & Orthopaedics and Fractures

No.

Mater / Unscheduled Care & Emergency Department

No

If yes:

- Which products?
- Approximately what percentage are returned annually?

6. Disposal

Where devices are not returned or reused, what is the standard disposal route?

For example:

- Clinical waste
- Domestic waste
- Recycling
- Specialist waste contractor
- Charity donation
- Other

Allied Health Professions

Occupational Therapy - Patients will dispose of devices as they see fit – the service do not advise on methods of disposal. Most likely domestic waste.

Physiotherapy

Most likely domestic waste, recycling or charity donation.

Trauma & Orthopaedics and Fractures

Not known - devices are not returned.

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Mater / Unscheduled Care & Emergency Department

Not known - devices are not returned.

7. Waste & Sustainability

Has your Trust undertaken any assessment or audit within the last five years relating to:

- **Waste generated from orthopaedic devices**

Allied Health Professions

No

Trauma & Orthopaedics and Fractures

No assessment or audit has been undertaken regarding waste generated.

Mater / Unscheduled Care & Emergency Department

No assessment or audit has been undertaken regarding waste generated.

- **Environmental impact**

Allied Health Professions

No

Trauma & Orthopaedics and Fractures

No

Mater / Unscheduled Care & Emergency Department

No

Estates

Under Section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Trust can confirm that it does not hold information regarding any assessment or audit undertaken within the last five years.

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- **Carbon emissions**

Allied Health Professions

No

Trauma & Orthopaedics

No

Mater / Unscheduled Care & Emergency Department

No

Estates

Under Section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Trust can confirm that it does not hold information regarding any assessment or audit undertaken within the last five years.

- **Opportunities for reuse or recycling**

Allied Health Professions

No

Trauma, Orthopaedics & Fractures

No

Mater / Unscheduled Care & Emergency Department

No

If so, please provide copies where available.

8. Financial Savings

Has your Trust produced any business case, report or estimate relating to potential financial savings from improving recovery or reuse of orthopaedic devices?

If yes, please provide copies where possible.

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Allied Health Professions

No

Trauma & Orthopaedics and Fractures

No

Mater / Unscheduled Care & Emergency Department

No

9. Future Plans

Is your Trust currently considering or planning any initiative relating to:

- **Recovery**
- **Refurbishment**
- **Recycling**
- **Circular economy programmes**
- **Manufacturer take-back schemes**

for orthopaedic walking boots or immobilisation devices?

Allied Health Professions

No

Trauma, Orthopaedics & Fractures

No initiatives planned.

Mater / Unscheduled Care & Emergency Department

No initiatives planned.

10. Contracts

If applicable, please provide:

- **The current supplier(s)**
- **Contract start date**

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- **Contract expiry date**

for orthopaedic walking boots and immobilisation devices.

Allied Health Professions

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Mater / Unscheduled Care & Emergency Department

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