Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
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FOI/38213

20 October 2026

Mental Health - Children and young people

This request follows a written Assembly answer of 7 August 2026, in which the then Minister of Health confirmed that Belfast Health and Social Care Trust was unable to provide attendance data for children and young people presenting at Emergency Departments with mental health concerns, on the basis that reasons for attendance are not consistently recorded or clinically coded within the Trust's Emergency Departments.

1.The total number of Emergency Department attendances by children and young people (under 18) with a recorded mental health concern, by year, for each year from 2019/20 to 2025/26 (or the nearest reporting periods for which any data, including partial or manually reviewed data, is held).

Year	Number of Attendances
2019/2020	362
2020/2021	365
2021/2022	372
2022/2023	347
2023/2024	394
2024/2025	384
2025/2026	342
Grand Total	**2566**

2. Written confirmation of when the Trust expects to be able to consistently record and clinically code reasons for Emergency Department attendance; whether any partial, estimated, or manually reviewed data exists for this period despite the coding gap; and what specific steps are being taken to remedy the current inability to report this information.

Current data held relates to those referred by Emergency Department to Crisis Assessment and Intervention Team only.

No time frame at present around the expectation above.

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3. Where recorded, a breakdown by presenting reason (for example self-harm, eating disorder, or other emotional or mental health crisis) for these attendances.

2566 attendances related to Mental Health were recorded during the periods in question. During a single attendance, many patients presented with Multiple Mental Health related Diagnosis. In this case all conditions are listed below, not solely the primary mental health-related reason/reason for presentation.

Where numbers are low, we have indicated <5 rather than provide the exact figure. Releasing such small numbers has the potential to make people identifiable and disclosure would constitute a breach of the principles of the General Data Protection Regulation 2018. This information is therefore exempt from release under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Information Relating to a Third Party.

Year	Self Harm	Suicidal Thoughts/Behaviour	Eating Disorder	Anxiety	Depression	Psychosis	Behavioural or Emotional Disturbance	Other Mental Health
2019/2020	73	58	<5	72	16	<5	8	218
2020/2021	88	55	19	105	11	6	7	174
2021/2022	76	50	30	92	5	<5	<5	181
2022/2023	64	44	18	80	14	<5	7	199
2023/2024	63	45	29	81	30	<5	8	218
2024/2025	104	93	31	92	57	<5	<5	125
2025/2026	83	108	16	86	44	6	<5	115

4. Data on the length of time these children and young people spent in Emergency Departments, broken down into wait-time bands (for example under 4 hours, 4–12 hours, over 12 hours, and over 24 hours), for the most recent full year for which this is held.

Year	less than 4 hours	4–12 hours	12- 24 Hours	More than 24 hours
2025/2026	142	140	37	23

5. Confirmation of whether the Trust holds any data cross-referencing children who attended A&E in mental health crisis with their concurrent CAMHS waiting list status, and if so, whether this can be provided in aggregate, non-identifiable form.

At present there is nothing built on the system which would allow us to report on the above. The waiting list is a live document which changes day to day.