Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
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# FOI/38664

**03 November 2026**

# Violence and Aggression by patients against staff working in Emergency Departments

**Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I am requesting information on incidents of violence and aggression by patients against staff working in Emergency Departments (EDs) within your organisation.**

**Please provide the following information.**

1. **Annual totals of incidents**

**For each calendar year from 1 January 2018 to the date of this request in 2026, please provide the total number of recorded incidents of violence and aggression perpetrated by patients against staff working in Emergency Departments.**

**Please provide one annual total for each year, covering the following periods:**

- **2018: 1 January – 31 December 2018** 114
- **2019: 1 January – 31 December 2019** 72
- **2020: 1 January – 31 December 2020** 48
- **2021: 1 January – 31 December 2021** 37
- **2022: 1 January – 31 December 2022** 45
- **2023: 1 January – 31 December 2023** 57
- **2024: 1 January – 31 December 2024** 94
- **2025: 1 January – 31 December 2025** 89
- **2026: 1 January – the date on which this request is received or processed, using the latest available data.**
  203 (approved as at 30/10/2026)

***Please note the following requirements regarding the data provided:***

1. ***Annual totals only: Please provide one total figure per calendar year. We are not requesting monthly figures, quarterly figures, or any other breakdown by reporting period.***

2. ***Single aggregate figure: Please provide the total number of incidents for each year, without splitting the figures into categories, subcategories or types of violence or aggression. For example, please do not provide separate figures for physical assault, verbal abuse, threats, or other forms of violence and aggression.***

3. ***Patient-to-staff incidents only: Include only incidents in which a patient was the perpetrator and a member of ED staff was the victim. Exclude***

*incidents involving staff against patients, staff against other staff, visitors against staff, visitors against patients, or any other perpetrator–victim combination.*

4. *Type-1 Emergency Departments only: Include incidents occurring within type-1 Emergency Departments. Exclude incidents occurring in other hospital departments or services, unless those incidents are recorded as occurring within an Emergency Department.*

5. *Consistent reporting: Please use the same incident definition and reporting methodology across the years wherever possible. If the definition, recording system or methodology has changed during the period, please explain this under section 2 below.*

***Where your organisation is responsible for multiple hospitals or Emergency Departments, please provide a single aggregate annual total covering all relevant EDs within your organisation. Do not provide separate figures for individual hospitals or departments.***

2. **Missing data and reporting coverage**

**For every calendar year in which a figure cannot be provided, or in which the figure does not cover the full reporting period, please explain the reason. Specifically, please:**

N/A