

10 March 2022

Gender Identity Services

Please could you send me the following statistics for the past 10 years?

How many referrals of patients to gender identity services are there each year in Northern Ireland with a breakdown, age of patient being referred and their biological sex?

Please see below the referral numbers to the Gender Identity Service.

2014 = 170
2015 = 161
2016 = 271
2017 = 299
2018 = 229
2019 = 157
2020 = 143
2021 = 131

Unfortunately the Trust can only provide you with data from 2014 due to the change in our recording systems. We are also unable to provide you with a breakdown of age or biological sex as this information would need to be gathered manually which would exceed 18 hours.

The Trust considers that the cost of retrieving the information would be above the 'Appropriate Limit' as defined by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 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 person spending 18 hours in determining whether we hold the information, locating, retrieving and extracting this information.

In terms of Northern Ireland how many patients per year are being prescribed affirmative treatment including a breakdown of puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones and surgery?

Almost all new patients referred to the transgender endocrinology clinic are prescribed a mix of "puberty blockers and cross sex hormones" after assessment. "Puberty blockers" and cross-sex hormone prescription will vary between patient and will vary at different stages in their transition journey and so a more detailed breakdown of therapy is not possible. Currently there are 301 patients under the care of gender identity services in endocrinology, the vast majority of which will therefore be receiving prescription of affirmative therapy.

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To provide approximate analysis of the number of patients listing a breakdown, age of patient being referred and their biological sex would involve a manual search of all patient case notes. This would take in excess of the 18 hours limit.

Surgery is handled outside of Northern Ireland and data is not held centrally within Belfast Trust. This is further compounded by the fact that many patient access surgery privately.