

Ref: FOI/2024/10364

Date Received: 10th December 2024

Response Due: 10th January 2025

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Dear Sir/Madam

With reference to your request for information received on 10th December 2024, I can confirm in accordance with Section 1 (1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 that we do hold part of the information you have requested. A response to each part of your request is provided below.

In your request you asked:

I would like to request the following information under FOI.

- 1. A copy of your pathway for assessment and provision of non- specialist Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), this includes tablet based devices, text to speech devices and apps but not equipment provided by the specialist hubs (eg eyegaze)**

Please see the pathway attached.

- 2. The number of patients (adult and children) assessed for a non-specialist communication aid in 2023 and 2024 (YTD)**

Data for the Adult service is not recorded or collected therefore we are unable to provide this information.

Children Assessed 01/04/2023 – 31/03/2024 = 61.

Children Assessed 01/04/2024 – 11/12/2024 = 50.

- 3. The number of patients (adult and children) provided with a non-specialist communication aid in 2023 and 2024 (YTD)**

Adult services:

2023 = <5 patients were issued a communication aid.

2024 = <5 patients were issued a communication aid.

Children's services:

Children provided with equipment 01/04/2023 – 31/03/2024 = 49 (<5 replacements for broken devices).

Children provided equipment 01/04/2024 – 11/12/2024 = 49.

4. Your budget for 2023 and 2023 for the provision of non-specialist communication aids eg boogie boards, lightwrighters, tablets and apps that require direct access NOT eyegaze

Adult services does not have a local budget. GM ICB provide some communication aids as permissible activity under the effective use of resources policy. Devices which do not meet the policy are funded by the IFR process.

Children's budget:

Budget for 2022/23 = £20,000.

Budget for 2023/24 = £20,000.

5. If provision of non-specialist communication aids is on a loan basis, then how long is this for eg 3 months, or as long as required

Adult services:

N/A – there is currently no local loan bank. We access the ACE Centre Oldham loan bank, their loans are on average 6 weeks.

Children's services:

As long as required.

6. If you do not have a budget for providing non-specialist communication aid devices (e.g. iPads and tablets, text to speech apps, keyboard based communication aids) how should a local, community or acute based speech and language therapist working for your organisation make available assessment and provision of these devices for adults (18 or over) living with speech difficulties?

Adult services:

Wigan SLT services have access to the Greater Manchester ICB AAC funding, Adults do not have a budget for communication aids, any communication aids were recharged to the ICB, 2023/24 = 2 iPads.

Children's services:

We do not have the option to provide devices via the GM pathway. We are in the process of setting this up.

7. The number of patients supported with a non-specialist communication aid via an individual funding requests

Adult services: 0 as all met GM funding criteria or self-funded.

Children's services: 0.

Please note: parts of the information has been provided in financial years due to the way this information is recorded.

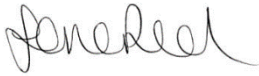
The Trust has a standard procedure of not releasing information when the data involved is less than 5. This is because we feel that such low numbers could make the individuals involved identifiable and therefore may cause undue harm and distress.

To disclose this information would:

- a) Contravene the Data Protection Act principles in that it would amount to unfair and possibly unlawful processing, as there was a legitimate expectation by the third parties that this information would remain confidential, and
- b) Disclosure may cause damage or distress to the individual(s) involved, and that damage or distress would be unwarranted (section 10 of the DPA).

If you are not entirely satisfied with this response, please do not hesitate to contact the Information Governance Department via the email address provided. If we do not hear from you within 40 days, we will assume that we have been able to accommodate your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Yours sincerely,



Sarah Deakin
Deputy Director of Operations and Performance – Community Division

PLEASE NOTE:

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our decision, you should write to: Information Governance Department, Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust, Suite 9, Buckingham Row, Brick Kiln Lane, Wigan, WN1 1XX.

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision at:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire, SK9 5AF

Helpline number: 0303 123 111