



Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals

NHS Foundation Trust

Information Governance Department

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WN1 1XX

Email: foi@wwl.nhs.uk

Web: www.wwl.nhs.uk

Ref: FOI/2024/10257

Date Received: 31st October 2024

Response Due: 28th November 2024

Date: 27th November 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

With reference to your request for information received on 31st October 2024, I can confirm in accordance with Section 1 (1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 that we do hold the information you have requested. A response to each part of your request is provided below.

In your request you asked:

In April-June 2024 there looks to have been a wide-ranging FOI to all Trusts around the use of RPA. We have been able to locate the attached (July 2024) response to this FOI on your Trust website, however it would be helpful if you could please help us with the below highlighted information:

1. **How many live automations do you have?**
2.
2. **How many departments do you have live automations in?**
2.
3. **What have been the main barriers or challenges your organisation has encountered in implementing automation initiatives?**
Learning curve for development of solutions, building of RPA focused team.
4. **What are the primary reasons for implementing automation within your organisation? Please select from: cost reduction, improved patient care, efficiency improvement, error reduction.**
Efficiency improvement, cost reduction.
5. **How many licences are under your contract?**
5 robots.
6. **What is your contract start date?**
April 2022.

7. What is your contract end date?

March 2027.

8. Are your organisation's RPA/IA licences contracted directly with the technology provider, or via a 3rd party intermediary? If via an intermediary, what is the name of their organisation?

Direct.

9. What is your current annual spend with your supplier for RPA licences?

This information is being withheld under Section 43 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please see below.

10. What is your current annual spend with your supplier on external professional services to deliver RPA/IA?

£0.

Section 43(2) – Commercial interests

Information regarding annual spend has been withheld under section 43(2) of the FOIA if its disclosure would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of the Trust.

Section 43 of the FOIA is a qualified exemption and is subject to the Prejudice Test and the Public Interest Test.

Prejudice test

We confirm that we have carried out a full prejudice test and that, on the balance of probability, the Trust's interests would be prejudiced in the event of disclosure. Therefore, we confirm that the Prejudice Test is engaged.

Public interest test

We have also carried out the Public Interest Test to ascertain whether the public interest in disclosure outweighs the public interest in withholding the requested information:

Public interest in disclosure of the information:

- We acknowledge that there is public interest in transparency around how the Trust engages with suppliers and procurement.
- We acknowledge that there is public interest in the Trust's finances.

Public interest in withholding of the information:

• **Protecting public finances** – As a public authority, the Trust must ensure that it obtains the best value for money. Disclosure of the information would be likely to affect the quality of future offers provided to the Trust. It is therefore firmly in the public interest not to disclose any information which would affect commercial offers made to the Trust, which in turn will affect the Trust's finances.

• **Ensuring fair competition** – Information provided to the Trust during the procurement process contains sensitive competition information. It is not in the public interest to disclose information which would affect free and fair competition.

• **Transparency** – We understand that there is public interest in how the Trust engages with suppliers. However, we consider that the information held by the Trust would not significantly further the public

understanding of its relationship with these suppliers beyond what has already been disclosed in this response.

• **Reputation damage or loss of confidence** - It is firmly in the public interest that the Trust takes all steps to protect its reputation around information handling. It is not in the public interest to do anything which would jeopardise our ability to maintain strong working relationships with third parties.

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,



Garry Harris
Deputy Director Digital & Chief Technology Officer

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