

FOI 057/2021 Response

Request

Dear Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust,

I am undertaking a study on technology adoption within the NHS.

On 23 February 2019, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care announced that NHS trusts should have infrastructure in place to replace pagers (bleeps) by 30 September 2021, with complete phase out of pagers (bleeps) by 31 December 2021.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/health-and-social-care-secretary-bans-pagers-from-the-nhs>

Under the FOI Act, please provide the following information, with "pagers" used as a synonym for "bleeps":

1. As at 31 May 2021, how many pagers were in use in your Trust?
2. For the financial year ending 31 March 2021, what is the total annualised cost of pagers (broken down by equipment rental, licences, low value equipment replacement, maintenance of infrastructure, depreciation on capital assets and any other costs)?
3. What stage of procurement and implementation is your Trust currently at and what are the achieved and proposed times for the various steps (e.g. business case approved, tender issued, contract awarded, implementation started, test system is live/user acceptance testing, deployed system is live)?
4. If a contract has been awarded, which pager replacement system has your Trust selected?
5. What additional features does your proposed (or implemented) pager replacement system have, compared with previous capability? (e.g. integration with electronic patient record)
6. How many *users* and how many *devices* will the pager replacement system have?
7. What is the estimated total annualised cost of the replacement system (broken down by equipment rental, licences, low value equipment replacement, maintenance of infrastructure, depreciation on capital assets and any other costs)?
8. Will the trust retain some pagers for *emergency* communications or will emergency communications be handled by the pager replacement system? If some pagers are being retained, how many?
9. If the pager replacement system fails, what will be used as a backup system? (e.g. do you have plans to use staff personal devices?)
10. Is the Trust on course to phase out pagers for *non-emergency* communications by 31 December 2021? If not, by when?
11. Is there a benefits realisation plan or post-implementation monitoring plan in place?

Response

The Trust currently have in place internal and external pagers however, we do not use them on a regular basis and we do not have any formal replacement programme in place.

The Trust have procured (Six) 6 Long range pagers which run over a network like a mobile phone, and they were obtained from PageOne Communications Ltd on a 12-month rental via a framework.

The Trust have returned (Three) 3 out of the six (6) pagers, and will be looking to cancel the 12-month rental contract we have in place with PageOne Communications Ltd. Please be aware that the current number of pagers are very low, and the likelihood of this causing any disruption to services is very low.

For the financial year 2020/2021 (starting on 1st April and ending on 31st March) the total cost for the pagers were £621.36

Please note that for our Internal paging systems within some of our sites, the Trust is unable to provide any information in relation to Internal pagers. This is because the information has not been captured within our systems.