

5th February 2020

Tel: 028 9536 3863
Email: FOI.BSO@hscni.net

BY EMAIL

Our Ref: FOI 1167

Dear 

Your request for information was received on 6th January 2020 and was dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Please be advised that the Business Services Organisation (BSO) has now completed its search for the information you requested with regards to dental practices.

I understand that you have received a response from the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB), but that some further information is required from the BSO. Further, and as previously advised, much of the information you have sought is neither held by BSO or HSCB.

In relation to the information held by BSO, please find the response as follows:

1) What is the average number of patients per dentist per surgery today, five years ago, ten years ago?

Please refer to the attached spreadsheet.

2) What is the average youngest age for first extractions / fillings for decay, last year, five years ago, 15 years ago?

Please refer to the attached spreadsheet.

3) Please advise the number of dentists practising in Northern Ireland for each of the past 10 years (if not possible last 5 years).'

The number of dentists working in GDS dental practices for each of the last ten years can be found online. Please refer to Table 2.1 at the following link:
[http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/pdf/Annex%20%20%20Dental Tables.xlsx](http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/pdf/Annex%20%20%20Dental%20Tables.xlsx)



4) For each of the past five years how many dentists have been signed off work sick for longer than two weeks?

The number who claimed long-term sickness in each calendar year is contained in the table below.

Calendar Year	# Dentists Claimed Long-Term Sickness in Year
2015	16
2016	12
2017	12
2018	16
2019	15

Please note: these figures are based on dentists being off at least four weeks due to sickness.

5) How many of these were signed off with stress?

This information is not held electronically. Rather, it is recorded on paper-based forms. BSO's Family Practitioner Service (FPS) have advised to extract this information would require a manual search through approximately 60 boxes held in offsite storage. It has been estimated that it would require, on average, one hour per box to extract this information.

This information is therefore exempt from disclosure as providing it would exceed the 'appropriate limit' as defined within Sections 3 and 4 of the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004.

Under the provisions of Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this therefore acts as a refusal to provide the information you are seeking:

12 Exemption where cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit

(1)Section 1(1) does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit

I hope that the information provided assists you. If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review. You should do this as soon as possible or in any case within two months of the date of issue of this letter.

In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to

Information Governance Manager,
2 Franklin Street,
Belfast,
BT2 8DQ

If, following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision making panel, you remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request, you may make a complaint under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner's Office and ask that they investigate whether the BSO has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act.

You can contact Information Commissioner at:

Website: www.ico.org.uk
Phone: 0303 123 1113
Email: casework@ico.org.uk
Post: Information Commissioner's Office
3rd Floor, 14 Cromac Place
Belfast
BT7 2JB

In most circumstances the Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out. However the Commissioner has the option to investigate the matter at his discretion.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Liam McIvor', written over a faint circular stamp or watermark.

Liam McIvor
Chief Executive

Year	Children Registered	Adults registered	Adult seen	Dentists	Surgeries
2009	272,122	598,682	538,368	853	354
2014	319,614	849,565	695,677	1,053	380
2019	329,491	883,566	755,703	1,139	376

Notes

The period for Adult dental registrations increased to 24 months on 01 August 2009, prior to that the registration period was only 15 months. This resulted in increased registration rates.

Children registration period is 12 months and so the numbers seen will be in line with those registered. Also due to the change in payment system, how childrens treatments are recorded has changed. As such, the information migrated across from the old system is an undercount and therefore registration figures are more accurate.

Registrations paid in March of each year with age calculated at 1st of March.

Children are those under 18 while adults are those 18 and over

Additional years for dental practitioners and surgeries can be found at the following link: <http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/1805.htm>

Details on patients registered, number of surgeries and practitioners can be found at the following link: <http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/3048.htm>

Dentist and Surgery figures will include Orthodontists and Oral Surgeons however they do not have registrations lists but will have been referred by another dentist for these treatments and as such registered with those dentists already. It is not possible to identify historically how many Orthodontists and Oral Surgeons there are.

Age at March 19	Average first Treatment Age	Count of patients
0	-	1,370
1	0.0	1,564
2	0.1	1,174
3	0.8	1,160
4	2.6	1,752
5	3.9	3,577
6	4.5	6,175
7	5.0	9,007
8	5.6	12,054
9	6.0	13,902
10	6.4	15,827
11	6.6	17,188
12	6.9	18,209
13	7.2	18,355
14	7.5	19,181
15	7.8	19,669
16	8.1	19,726
17	8.5	20,173

Age at March 14	Average first Treatment Age	Count of patients
0	-	43
1	0.1	18
2	1.4	55
3	2.6	426
4	3.3	1,637
5	4.0	3,931
6	4.5	6,756
7	5.1	9,703
8	5.6	11,490
9	6.0	13,525
10	6.4	14,770
11	6.9	15,729
12	7.5	16,767
13	8.3	17,416
14	9.2	18,869
15	10.2	19,907
16	11.2	20,109
17	12.1	20,575

Age at March 09	Average first Treatment Age	Count of patients
0	-	-
1	0.9	7
2	1.5	39
3	2.6	308
4	3.4	1,505
5	4.1	3,383
6	4.9	5,477
7	5.8	7,490
8	6.7	8,677
9	7.7	9,947
10	8.6	10,448
11	9.7	10,123
12	10.7	10,339
13	11.7	10,954
14	12.7	11,810
15	13.6	11,944
16	14.6	11,807
17	15.6	11,650

Notes

This looks at all data we have for those who have had a treatment for fillings or extractions and then looking at the age of when the first occurrence was

The BSO only have data back to April 2007 so don't know about any first treatments before then

This means for 2019 we should have a good history for those under 12 but for 2014 it would only be for those under 7's. For 2009, we would only have a full history (work done by GDS) for those under 2.

For example, the minimum possible age for a single child who is 17 in March 19 will be 5 and for those who are 17 in March 2014 it will be 10. As such the minimum possible age for a child who is 17 in March 2009 would be 15.

Treatment codes for fillings are all 14 codes except 1422-1425, 1431, 1451, 1499 and codes 4401, 5811, 5812, 5813, 5814, 5821, 5825, 5826, 5836, 6001

Treatment codes for extractions are all 21, 22 and 52 codes except 2121 and 5206

See SDR for more details <http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/2069.htm>. Based on paid treatments and information supplied by dentist making the claim. Excludes all private work. Excludes work carried out in hospitals.