

April 13th 2018**BY POST**Tel: 028 9536 3863
Email: FOI.BSO@hscni.net**BT9 5HW****Our Ref: FOI 868**Dear 

Your request for information was received on March 28th 2018 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 the number of applications by non-medical HSC staff for Mental Health Officer (MHO) status and the results of these applications, whether successful or unsuccessful.

The following information has been provided by the HSC Pension Service team:

Period covered	No. of Successful Applications
01/04/2009 to 31/12/2009	27
01/01/2010 to 31/12/2010	27
01/01/2011 to 31/12/2011	31
01/01/2012 to 31/12/2012	26
01/01/2013 to 31/12/2013	59
01/01/2014 to 31/12/2014	21
01/01/2015 to 31/12/2015	26
01/01/2016 to 31/12/2016	26
01/01/2017 to 31/12/2017	26

Throughout this period of time (2009 – 2017) there have been a total number of twenty seven (27) applications who have successfully appealed an originally unsuccessful application.

Prior to April 2009, the majority of member records were retained on hard copy files only there is no electronic means of identifying who submitted an application for MHO status. We have a complaints register that records internal dispute



appeals to any unsuccessful applications but this register does not pre date April 2009.

The only way to retrieve the complete requested information would be to manually examine the files of any member who had pensionable service prior to 1st April 1995 (when the awarding of Mental Health Officer status was abolished).

Prior to April 2009, non-medical members cannot be identified other than by manual examination of the record, in order to fully respond to your Freedom of Information request a manual examination of in excess of some 80,000 hard copy files would be required.

The Freedom of Information Act (2000) states that a public body, such as the BSO, may apply charges in order to provide information to the public. If a public body spends more than £450 on staff time in complying with a request, then charges may be applied; this figure is based on an hourly rate of £25 over 18 hours. Please refer to sections 12 and 13 of The Act, and sections 3 and 4 of The Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 ('The Fees Regulations') for further information.

The following formula has been used to assess if the cost of compliance has been exceeded.

Appropriate cost limit = £450.00 (18 hours @ £25 per hour)

Hours required to examine 80,000 records = 6666 hours approx (based on approximately 5 mins per record)

Total cost to comply with request = £166,667 approximately.

We are therefore unable to continue to process your request for information fully until the above amount is paid.

If you wish the BSO to continue to process your request and commence with the manual examination of approximately 80,000 records please forward the above fee via reply, please be advised that you should pay the fee within 3 months (i.e. 10/07/2018).

If the BSO does not receive payment of the fee by this date, the request will be considered closed.

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

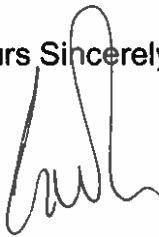
If, following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision making panel, you remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request, you may make a complaint under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner's Office and ask that they investigate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

Liam McIvor
Chief Executive