

Our Ref: LW/lmw/FOI.354.23  
Date: 4<sup>th</sup> December 2023

Laurie Wrench  
Deputy Director of Governance  
North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust  
Lawton House  
Bellringer Road  
Trentham  
ST4 8HH

Tel 01782 275030

Dear

### **Freedom of Information Act Request**

I am writing in response to your e-mail of the 8<sup>th</sup> November 2023. Your request has been processed using the Trust's procedures for the disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000).

#### ***Requested information:***

Please find attached a list of questions as a Freedom of Information (FoI) request, on the use, training and policies regarding translation services and technology in your organisation. We would appreciate it if you did your best to complete the questionnaire with answers that fully represent your organisation's practices and policies.

We understand if you need to send your response in a certain format, but can we please ask that you provide your answers within the document attached, and you return it to us in the same format, as an email attachment. If you have any reference materials relevant to your responses, please refer to these in your answers and also provide those as attachments alongside the completed form.

#### **Please see Appendix 1 attached.**

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review of the management of your request. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to: Dr Buki Adeyemo, Chief Executive, North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare Trust, Trust Headquarters, Lawton House, Bellringer Road, Trentham, ST4 8HH. If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely



**Laurie Wrench**  
**Deputy Director of Governance**

## FoI Request Questionnaire

Some of the questions in this questionnaire allow for a quick answer, simply by deleting **Yes** or **No** as appropriate, but others require more detailed answers. We thank you in advance for doing your best to answer the questionnaire in the most complete way you can.

<b>1</b>	<b>What is the size of the resident population that your organisation serves?</b>
	<b>Response:</b> <b>The Trust provides services to a population of approximately 464,000 people of all ages and diverse backgrounds in Stoke-on-Trent and across North Staffordshire.</b>
1.1	What percentage of the resident population in the area that your organisation serves are non-native English speakers?  <b>Response:</b> <b>From the 2021 census,</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>6.9% of households in the Trust area (10.1% in City of Stoke on Trent) have at least some people for whom English is not a main language.</b></li> <li>• <b>2.95% of households have people with NO English as a main language (5.3% in City of Stoke on Trent)</b></li> </ul>
1.2	Does your organisation predict that the number of non-native English speakers living in the area that you serve will increase, reduce, or stay the same in the next 5 years?  <b>Response:</b> <b>There is potential for this percentage to increase over the next 5 years.</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Does your organisation hire any professional written translation or spoken interpreting services to aid communication with people who may have difficulties understanding English?</b>
	<b>Response:</b> [Yes/No] <b>Yes</b>
2.1	If your organisation hires professional translation or interpreting services, for what type of material do you use these services?  (E.g., do you hire professional translation services to translate website content, correspondence, legal documents? Do you hire interpreting services for meetings, interviews, anything else?)
	<b>Response:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Digital translation of documents (generally now using Office 365) – appointment letters, outcome letters etc</b></li> <li>• <b>(Rarely) human translation of documents</b></li> <li>• <b>International language interpretation services (telephone and video interpretation as default, face to face – by exception) – for health appointments and assessments</b></li> <li>• <b>BSL / deaf blind interpretation (e.g., tactile signing) as required- for health appointments and assessments.</b></li> <li>• <b>BSL for Trust business meetings/events on occasion</b></li> </ul>
2.2	If your organisation hires professional translation or interpreting services, can you please provide figures for how much was spent by your organisation on these services and what percentage of your total expenditure this amounted to for the last 4 financial years?

	<b>Response:</b>															
	<table><tr><th>Financial year</th><th>Translation &amp; interpreting expenditure</th><th>% of total expenditure</th></tr><tr><td>2018/19:</td><td>Recite transIn £720 + VAT</td><td>0.04 %</td></tr><tr><td>2019/20:</td><td>Recite transIn £995 + VAT</td><td>0.04 %</td></tr><tr><td>2020/21:</td><td>Recite transIn £995 + VAT</td><td>0.03 %</td></tr><tr><td>2021/22:</td><td>Recite transIn £1050 + VAT</td><td>0.03 %</td></tr></table>	Financial year	Translation & interpreting expenditure	% of total expenditure	2018/19:	Recite transIn £720 + VAT	0.04 %	2019/20:	Recite transIn £995 + VAT	0.04 %	2020/21:	Recite transIn £995 + VAT	0.03 %	2021/22:	Recite transIn £1050 + VAT	0.03 %
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2.3	Does your organisation predict that the percentage of spending on translation and interpreting services will increase, reduce, or stay the same in the next 5 years?															
	<b>Response:</b> <b>The Trust is working to make more efficient use of our expenditure on interpretation services through telephone and digital interpretation, but we will continue to provide these services as and when needed.</b>															
3	Is machine translation (e.g., a translation app such as Google Translate) used in any way in your organisation?															
	<b>Response:</b> [Yes/No] <b>Yes</b>															
3.1	If machine translation is used in your organisation, under what circumstances is it used? (Please specify by whom, in which context, using which tools, and the reason of use.)															
	<b>Response:</b> <b>Machine translation is used for general translation of appointment letters and outcome letters etc. The Trust previously used ReciteMe translation tool but now use Office 365 as it is freely available and can be generated by anyone with Office 365.</b>															
4	Does your organisation follow a formal policy approving, prohibiting, or regulating the use of machine translation tools in your organisation?															
	<b>Response:</b> [Yes/No] <b>No</b>															
4.1	If your organisation follows a formal policy for the use of machine translation, can you attach a copy of such policy to your response and/or provide a link to where it can be accessed?															
	<b>Response:</b> <b>N/A</b>															
5	Has your organisation carried out a risk assessment of possible consequences, for your organisation and/or for the people the organisation serves, from the use of machine translation?															
	<b>Response:</b> <b>Yes - Informal internal risk assessment</b>															
5.1	If your organisation has carried out a risk assessment of the use of machine translation, please can you specify the risks your organisation identified?															
	<b>Response:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Incorrect phrasing or mistranslations</b></li><li>• <b>Not considering cultural differences / local sensitivities</b></li><li>• <b>Not translating acronyms or colloquialisms or typos</b></li><li>• <b>risk of service user misunderstanding information provided and subsequent potential failure to comply with requests / treatment plan.</b></li></ul>															
6	Do you have an established line of accountability in the event of negative outcomes that may arise from the use of machine translation?															

	(E.g., an incident caused by misinformation in an important document, or by miscommunication between staff and member of the public using a phone app.)
	<b>Response:</b> [Yes/No] <b>No</b>
6.1	If you have an established line of accountability, can you explain how this guides response procedures to a possible negative outcome from the use of machine translation?
	<b>Response:</b> <b>N/A</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Is any training provided on the use of machine translation in your organisation?</b>
	<b>Response:</b> [Yes/No] <b>Yes</b>
7.1	If training is provided on the use of machine translation in your organisation, can you please provide an overview of the training offered?
	<b>Response:</b> <b>Available on request and tailored to identified needs.</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Does your organisation have any other procedures in place to adjust your communication strategy for people who may have difficulties understanding English? If so, please explain.</b>
	<b>Response:</b> <b>Yes, we have an informal communication register with staff who are fluent in other languages who are happy to provide informal communication support when the need arises (NB does not replace in any way provision of qualified interpretation service, this is additional / for use at other times)</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>If we would like to follow up with your organisation for the purpose of further research relating to translation and/or interpreting in your organisation, could you please provide the most suitable email address to contact?</b>
	<b>Response:</b> <b>Interpretation Services- Head of Facilities</b> <b>Translation Services- Diversity &amp; Inclusion Lead</b>  <b>Staff's email addresses are exempt as they constitute personal data and would contravene the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018 (in accordance with qualified exemption S40 (2)(a) of the FOI Act). Details of members of staff and e-mail addresses can be sought from Departments directly and can be contacted via our Main Switchboard at the Harlands Hospital on 0300 123 1535</b>