

Our Ref: NG/RM/26167
Date: 26th June 2026

Nicola Griffiths
Deputy Director of Governance
North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust
Lawton House
Bellringer Road
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ST4 8HH

Reception: 0300 123 1535

Dear

Freedom of Information Act Request

I am writing in response to your e-mail of the 22nd June 2026. Your request has been processed using the Trust's procedures for the disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000).

Requested information:

We are seeking to understand:

1. Whether Trusts in England undertake formal Allied Health Professional (AHP) safe staffing establishment reviews which include physiotherapists and support workers.
2. The extent of local policies for providing cover for maternity and long-term sickness absence for the physiotherapy workforce.
3. The extent to which Trusts are implementing recruitment freezes or delays in recruitment of physiotherapy staff.
4. The questions below are designed to establish the answers to these 3 lines of enquiry.

No	Question	Response
	Local workforce planning	
1a	Do you undertake formal AHP Safe Staffing Establishment reviews within your Trust? • Yes, for some AHPs in the Trust • Yes for all AHPs in the Trust • No	Our bi- annual safer staffing deep dive reviews for Inpatient Wards take into consideration the wider MDT workforce.
1b.	Do you undertake formal registered Physiotherapy Safe Staffing Establishment reviews within your Trust? • Yes for all physiotherapy staff • Yes for some Physiotherapy staff • No	Our bi- annual safer staffing deep dive reviews for Inpatient Wards take into consideration the wider MDT workforce
1c	If you answered yes to Question 1b, when was the last Physiotherapy Safe Staffing Establishment Review conducted? • 0 to 2 years	Inpatient Safer staffing reviews which take the wider MDT requirements

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Chief Executive: Dr Buki Adeyemo

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	• 3 to 5 years • 6 to 8 years • 8 to 10 years • Over 10 years	into account take place on a bi-annual basis, the last one was reported to Trust Board in January 2026.
1d	What action has the Trust taken when reviews highlight understaffing of physiotherapy staff in Trusts? • Increase registered physiotherapy posts • Increase physiotherapy support worker posts • Increase administration posts • Neither of the above	Recommendations are made to the Trust board, and actions are monitored via the Trusts Safer Staffing Group.
1e	Does your organisation have a formal, documented definition of 'safe and effective staffing' that includes AHP services? • Yes - we have a standardised definition for AHPs only (separate from other professions) • No- we do not have a formal documented definition for AHP staffing • Unsure	The safer staffing Policy applies the 'right staff, right skill, right place / time' principals
1f	Have you developed any local teaching or training resources regarding AHP Safe Staffing? • Yes, we have developed resources, but they are for internal use only • Yes, we have developed resources, and they could be shared nationally/ regionally • No, we have not developed any local resources • No, but resources are currently in development	No, we have not developed any local resources
Local employment policies		
2a	Does your trust have a budget for maternity cover or a policy for allowing overspend to pay for maternity cover? • Yes • No	Yes – Maternity cover can be backfilled with 0.6wte for the duration of the Maternity Leave.
2b	If you answered yes to 2a, is this budget or policy accessible to cover nursing staff maternity leave?	yes
2c	If you answered yes to 2a, is this budget or policy accessible to cover physiotherapy staff maternity leave?	yes

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2d	If you answered yes to 2c, does the budget provide: • 100% cover • 75-99% cover • 50-74% cover • Less than 50% cover	0.6 WTE per 1.0 WTE maternity leave
2e	Does your trust have a budget for long term sickness cover or a policy for allowing overspend to pay for long term sickness cover? • Yes • No	No
2f	If you answered yes to 2e, is this budget or policy accessible to cover long term sickness leave for physiotherapy staff?	N/A
2g	If you answered yes to 2f, does the budget provide: • 100% cover • 75-99% cover • 50-74% cover • Less than 50% cover	N/A
Recruitment		
3a	How many registered physiotherapist roles by head count for each band did the Trust recruit to between 1 January and 31 December 2023? • Band 5 • Band 6 • Band 7 • Band 8a	Band 5 - 1
3b	How many registered physiotherapist roles by head count for each band did the Trust recruit to between 1 January and 31 December 2024? • Band 5 • Band 6 • Band 7 • Band 8a	0
3c	How many registered physiotherapist roles by head count for each band did the Trust recruit to between 1 January and 31 December 2025? • Band 5 • Band 6 • Band 7 • Band 8a	Band 5 - 1

3d	Has the Trust operated a recruitment freeze or pause in recruitment for physiotherapy staff in the last 12 months? • Yes • No • Not sure	No
3e	Do you anticipate the Trust carrying out recruitment freezes or pause in recruitment for physiotherapy staff in the next 12 months? • Yes • No • Not sure	No

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



Nicola Griffiths
Deputy Director of Governance