

Question:

Please provide all information, records, and correspondence held by the Department of Health relating to the Gender Identity Service established in 2014.

This request includes, but is not limited to:

- *Internal and external correspondence, including emails, letters, and meeting notes.*
- *Ministerial submissions, briefings, advice papers, policy advice, and speaking notes.*
- *Policy documents, whether draft or final.*
- *Correspondence with clinicians, Health and Social Care Trusts, professional bodies, regulators, charities, lobby groups, or other external organisations.*
- *Communications between the Department and the Ministerial private office relating to the Gender Identity Service established in 2014.*
- *Records of meetings, discussions, decisions, or considerations in which puberty blockers were referenced or discussed.*

Response:

I am writing to advise you that following a search of the Department's and The Strategic Planning and Performance Group's (SPPG) paper and electronic records, the information you requested has been located and is compressed into 4 ZIP folders due to the size of the files. The first is attached to this email and 3 further emails with attachments will follow.

Throughout the documents you will see we have made a number of redactions by applying Section 40 of the Freedom of Information Act (details below). Primarily the redacted information relates to the names of staff however there is one instance where a redaction has been applied to a small number relating to service users which potentially could have indirectly led to identification.

Section 40 – 'Personal Information'

(1) Any information to which a request for information relates is exempt information if it constitutes personal data of which the applicant is the data subject.

(2) Any information to which a request for information relates is also exempt information if –(a)it constitutes personal data which does not fall within subsection (1), and

(b) the first, second or third condition below is satisfied.

(3)(A) The first condition is that the disclosure of the information to a member of the public otherwise than under this Act –(a)would contravene any of the data protection principles, or

(b) would do so if the exemptions in section 24(1) of the Data Protection Act 2018(manual unstructured data held by public authorities) were disregarded.

(3)(B) The second condition is that the disclosure of the information to a member of the public otherwise than under this Act would contravene Article 21 of the GDPR (general processing: right to object to processing).

(4)(A) The third condition is that –(a) on a request under Article 15(1) of the GDPR (general processing: right of access by the data subject) for access to personal data, the information would be withheld in reliance on provision made by or under section 15, 16 or 26 of, or Schedule 2, 3 or 4 to, the Data Protection Act 2018, or
(b) on a request under section 45(1)(b) of that Act (law enforcement processing: right of access by the data subject), the information would be withheld in reliance on subsection (4) of that section.

If you wish to request a copy of the attachments for this response, please contact the FOI team at FOI@health-ni.gov.uk

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