



**East London**  
**NHS Foundation Trust**  
**Information Governance**  
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27 May 2025

**Our reference: FOI DA6067**

I am responding to your request for information received 21 May 2025. This has been treated as a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I am now enclosing a response which is attached to the end of this letter. Please do not hesitate to contact me on the contact details above if you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely,

Information Rights Coordinator

If you are dissatisfied with the Trust's response to your FOIA request then you should contact us and we will arrange for an internal review of this decision.

If you remain dissatisfied with the decision following our response to your complaint, you may write to the Information Commissioner for a decision under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

Tel: 0303 123 1113  
Web: [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)

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**Chief Executive Officer:** Lorraine Sunduza  
**Chair:** Eileen Taylor

**Request:** I am submitting this request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 regarding the use and management of 'short arm casting' within your organisation.

I would be grateful if you could provide the following data for the past three calendar years (or the most recent available), preferably broken down annually:

**Question 1: Clinical & Treatment Metrics**

- Annual number of short arm casts applied
- Breakdown by clinical indication (e.g. distal radius, scaphoid fractures, soft tissue injuries)
- Average duration of immobilisation
- Refracture or re-casting rate within 6–12 weeks
- Complication rates (e.g. skin breakdown, pressure sores, compartment syndrome)
- Follow-up appointment frequency (for cast checks/removal)
- Percentage of patients requiring imaging during or after casting

**Answer:** The Trust has reviewed question 1 of your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000.

Section 1(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 states:

*Any person making a request for information to a public authority is entitled—*  
*(a) to be informed in writing by the public authority whether it holds information of the description specified in the request, and*

*(b) if that is the case, to have that information communicated to them.*

East London NHS Foundation Trust is primarily a Mental Health and Community Health Trust and as such does not provide short arm casts. The Trust is therefore unable to provide a response.

**Question 2: Economic Metrics**

- Average cost per short arm cast treatment (including materials, labour, appointments)
- Cost comparison between plaster and fibreglass casts
- Staff time allocation per cast application (by professional category)
- Number of casts outsourced to private providers (if applicable)
- Costs associated with cast-related complications or unplanned re-interventions

**Answer:** The Trust has reviewed question 2 of your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000.

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**Question 3: Operational & Workforce Metrics**



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- **Average staff time required for short arm cast application**
- **Number of certified staff per site qualified to apply/remove short arm casts**
- **Backlog or average wait times for fracture clinic appointments involving casting**
- **Local variation or standardisation in casting practices**

Answer: The Trust has reviewed question 3 of your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000.

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#### **Question 4: Patient Outcomes / Experience**

- **Patient satisfaction scores related to short arm casts (comfort, weight, duration)**
- **Compliance rates (e.g. early removal, misuse)**
- **Patient-reported issues (e.g. hygiene difficulties, discomfort, lifestyle interference)**
- **Average recovery time (e.g. return to work or function)**

Answer: The Trust has reviewed question 4 of your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000.

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#### **Question 5: Replacement & Reuse Metrics\***

- **Percentage of casts requiring unplanned replacement**
- **Early cast removals due to complications or discomfort**
- **Policy or practice on reusability of casting materials**

Answer: The Trust has reviewed question 5 of your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000.

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**Question 6: Procurement & Usage**

- **Annual volume of short arm casting materials purchased**
- **Types of materials used (e.g. fibreglass, plaster of Paris, thermoformable)**
- **Approved suppliers and average price per unit**
- **Stock turnover rates or average inventory for casting materials**

Answer: The Trust has reviewed question 6 of your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000.

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**Question 7: Advanced Clinical & Pathway Metrics**

- **Demographic breakdown of patients receiving short arm casts (e.g. age, gender)**
- **Setting of injury management (A&E, outpatient, GP referral)**
- **Percentage of patients transitioning to splints post-casting**
- **Rate of physiotherapy referrals following short arm casting**
- **Average number of radiographic controls per patient**
- **Time from injury to definitive immobilisation**
- **Cast failure rates requiring re-casting**

Answer: The Trust has reviewed question 7 of your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000.

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**Question 8: Financial & Procurement Insights**

- **Total annual spend on casting materials**
- **Breakdown of cost components (materials, staff, imaging, etc.)**
- **Comparison of in-house vs. outsourced casting costs**
- **Budget caps or cost thresholds for orthopaedic consumables**



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- **Contract duration and renewal cycles for casting supplies**
- **Tender evaluation criteria for casting materials**
- **Frequency of backorders or stock shortages**
- **Criteria for adopting new immobilisation technologies**
- **Barriers to adoption of new casting products (if recorded)**

Answer: The Trust has reviewed question 8 of your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000.

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