



East London
NHS Foundation Trust
Information Governance
Robert Dolan House
9 Alie Street
London
E1 8DE

Email elft.foi@nhs.net
Website: <https://www.elft.nhs.uk>

26/01/2026

Our reference: FOI DA6443

I am responding to your request for information received 22nd January 2026. 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,

FOI Team

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

Please note that the data supplied is not allowed to be re-used and/or published without the explicit consent of East London NHS Foundation Trust. Please contact the signatory to request permission if this is your intention



We promise to work together creatively to: learn 'what matters' to everyone, achieve a better quality of life and continuously improve our services.
We care . We respect . We are inclusive

Chief Executive Officer: Lorraine Sunduza
Chair: Eileen Taylor

Request:

I would be grateful if you could provide the information requested below in relation to your Cellular Pathology service.

Question 1: Case Volumes & Activity

Total number of Cellular Pathology cases processed:

- **In the most recent completed financial year**
- **Year-to-date for the current financial year**

Average monthly case volume.

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 pathology services. The Trust is therefore unable to provide a response.

Question 2: Current Backlog & Turnaround Times

Current number of unreported cases, broken down by:

- **Routine**
- **Urgent / cancer**

Backlog volume by sub-specialty (e.g. GI, Gynaecological, Breast, Skin, Urology, etc.).

Average turnaround times (TATs) for:

- **Routine cases**
- **Urgent / cancer cases**

Highest backlog volume recorded in the past 12 months.

Answer: The Trust has reviewed question 2 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 pathology services. The Trust is therefore unable to provide a response.

Question 3: Backlog Management Measures



We promise to work together creatively to: learn 'what matters' to everyone, achieve a better quality of life and continuously improve our services.
We care . We respect . We are inclusive

Chief Executive Officer: Lorraine Sunduza
Chair: Eileen Taylor

Please confirm which of the following measures are currently used to manage reporting backlogs (and specify where applicable):

- **Consultant overtime / internal insourcing**
- **Use of locum consultant pathologists**
- **Outsourcing to external reporting providers**
- **Digital pathology / remote reporting**
- **Other measures (please specify)**

Answer: The Trust has reviewed question 3 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 pathology services. The Trust is therefore unable to provide a response.

Question 4: Outsourcing & Locum Spend (Last 3 Financial Years)

Outsourced Reporting

For each of the last three financial years, please provide:

- **Total spend on outsourced pathology reporting.**
- **Number of cases outsourced. Names of external reporting providers used. Whether service level agreements (SLAs) are in place and, if so:**
 - **Agreed turnaround time**
 - **Any performance measures or penalties (if applicable)**

Locum & Agency Spend

- **Total spend on locum consultant pathologists.**
- **Names of agencies used.**
- **Average duration of locum engagements.**

Answer: The Trust has reviewed question 4 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 pathology services. The Trust is therefore unable to provide a response.

Question 5: Digital Pathology Infrastructure

Whether digital pathology is currently used for primary diagnosis (Yes/No).

If yes:



We promise to work together creatively to: learn 'what matters' to everyone, achieve a better quality of life and continuously improve our services.
We care . We respect . We are inclusive

Chief Executive Officer: Lorraine Sunduza
Chair: Eileen Taylor

- **Manufacturer and model of whole-slide scanners in use**
- **Year digital pathology reporting commenced**
- **Whether remote reporting is enabled**

Current Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS).

Approximate percentage of cases currently reported digitally.

Answer: The Trust has reviewed question 5 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 pathology services. The Trust is therefore unable to provide a response.

Question 6: Workforce Capacity

Current establishment (WTE) of:

- **Substantive consultant pathologists**
- **Biomedical Scientists / Advanced Practitioners**

Number of additional consultants and BMS staff required to operate at full service capacity.

Sub-specialties where staffing shortages are most acute.

Answer: The Trust has reviewed question 6 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 pathology services. The Trust is therefore unable to provide a response.

Question 7: Future Planning

Whether the Trust has a documented strategy or business case for:

- **Expanding digital pathology**
- **Increasing remote reporting capability**
- **Reducing backlogs through external or hybrid support models**

Indicative timelines for implementation within the next 12–24 months (if available).



We promise to work together creatively to: learn 'what matters' to everyone, achieve a better quality of life and continuously improve our services.
We care . We respect . We are inclusive

Chief Executive Officer: Lorraine Sunduza
Chair: Eileen Taylor

Answer The Trust has reviewed question 7 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 pathology services. The Trust is therefore unable to provide a response.

Question 8: Relevant Contacts & Engagement

Please provide the name, job title, and work contact details (email address and telephone number) for the following roles:

- **Laboratory Manager / Head of Cellular Pathology**
- **Lead Consultant Pathologist**
- **Clinical Director for Pathology or Diagnostics**

Please confirm whether the Trust would be open to a conversation regarding potential solutions to support:

- **Backlog reduction**
- **Workforce capacity constraints**
- **Digital pathology or remote reporting initiatives**

If so, please confirm the most appropriate individual or department to contact for such discussions.

Answer The Trust has reviewed question 8 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 pathology services. The Trust is therefore unable to provide a response.

Question 9: Cancer Pathway Performance

Please confirm whether the Trust has breached national cancer waiting time targets (e.g. the 62-day cancer pathway) due to Cellular Pathology reporting delays within the last 12 months.

If yes, please provide the number of cases affected (where available).

Answer The Trust has reviewed question 9 of your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000.

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



We promise to work together creatively to: learn 'what matters' to everyone, achieve a better quality of life and continuously improve our services.
We care . We respect . We are inclusive

Chief Executive Officer: Lorraine Sunduza
Chair: Eileen Taylor

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 pathology services. The Trust is therefore unable to provide a response.

Question 10: Glass Slide Handling

Whether physical glass slides are currently transported off-site for external reporting (Yes/No).

If yes:

- **Approximate monthly volume of cases**
- **Method of transport (e.g. courier, internal transfer)**

Answer The Trust has reviewed question 10 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 pathology services. The Trust is therefore unable to provide a response.

Question 11: Consultant Reporting Capacity

Whether current consultant pathologists are reporting at full programmed activity capacity (Yes/No).

If no, please outline the main limiting factors (e.g. job planning constraints, SPA commitments, management duties).

Answer The Trust has reviewed question 11 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 pathology services. The Trust is therefore unable to provide a response.

Question 12: Governance & Access Constraints



We promise to work together creatively to: learn 'what matters' to everyone, achieve a better quality of life and continuously improve our services.
We care . We respect . We are inclusive

Chief Executive Officer: Lorraine Sunduza
Chair: Eileen Taylor

Please confirm whether there are any governance, IT, or information governance restrictions that limit the use of:

- **External reporters**
- **Remote digital pathology reporting**

If yes, please outline the nature of these restrictions.

Answer The Trust has reviewed question 12 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 pathology services. The Trust is therefore unable to provide a response.

Question 13: Backlog Mitigation Models Used

Please confirm which of the following backlog mitigation models the Trust has utilised within the last 12 months:

- **On-site agency locum consultant pathologists**
- **Off-site outsourced reporting (digital and/or glass slides)**
- **Hybrid models (combination of on-site and off-site support)**

Where more than one model has been used, please confirm whether:

- **One model has been used more frequently than the others, or**
- **Usage has been broadly equivalent.**

Please confirm whether any internal policy, guidance, or procurement preference exists regarding:

- **On-site agency locums versus**
- **Outsourced / off-site reporting solutions.**

Answer The Trust has reviewed question 13 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 pathology services. The Trust is therefore unable to provide a response.



We promise to work together creatively to: learn 'what matters' to everyone, achieve a better quality of life and continuously improve our services.
We care . We respect . We are inclusive

Chief Executive Officer: Lorraine Sunduza
Chair: Eileen Taylor