

**Freedom of Information Act 2000 - Request Reference FoI/23/021**

**Agency Staff Spend**

**1) Please can you state your trust's total off-framework agency staff spend for healthcare staff in the following financial years:**

**i) 2017/18 -**

**ii) 2018/19 - 122,903**

**iii) 2019/20 - 70,362**

**iv) 2020/21 - 199,390**

**v) 2021/22 - 852,838**

**vi) 2022/23 to date - 675,285**

**2) Please provide a breakdown of this figure by the staffing agency used, providing the company name and the total spent with the agency in the year, for each of the following financial years.**

**i) 2017/18**

**ii) 2018/19**

**iii) 2019/20**

**iv) 2020/21**

**v) 2021/22**

**vi) 2022/23 to date**

Suppliers used:

- CAMHS Professionals Ltd
- Marie Curie Cancer Care
- Medical Staffing Ltd
- Presto Nursing Ltd
- The City Hospice Trust
- The Placement Group Nursing Ltd
- Thornbury Nursing Services Ltd

After considering your request, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board (the UHB) considers the annual spend data to be exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (Section 43) Commercial Interests. This section of the Act sets out an exemption from the right to know if:

- the information requested is a trade secret, or
- release of the information is likely to prejudice the commercial interests of any person. (A person may be an individual, a company, the public authority itself or any other legal entity).

This exemption was considered by the UHB when deciding whether to disclose information because it considered that in doing so there could be a significant risk in prejudicing the commercial interests of both Cardiff University and the UHB. As this is a qualified exemption, the UHB is required to complete a public interest test in deciding whether it is in the public's interest to withhold or disclose the information.

**In favour of disclosure:** There is a public interest in transparency and in the accountability of spending of public funds. Furthermore, it is in the public's interest that public funds be used effectively and that public sector bodies obtain the best value for money when contracting for the provision of services.

**Against disclosure:** It has been established that releasing the information sought under the Freedom of Information Act, to which the UHB is subject, will give an unfair advantage to the supplier's competitors. There is a risk of disclosure prejudicing the commercial interests of the UHB by affecting its bargaining position with suppliers. This in turn could lead to less effective use of public funds in future. The UHB believes that there is wider established public interest in suppliers not being prejudiced merely because they have contracted with a public sector body (as upheld in ICO decision notice FS50473543 ICO v Royal Marsden Hospital Trust).

**Decision:** The UHB considers that the public interest in withholding the information is greater than the interests in disclosing it and thereby giving unfair commercial advantage to competitors of the supplier to which this information concerns. The UHB believes that disclosure of information in a manner which fails to protect the interests and relationships arising in a commercial context could have the effect of discouraging companies from dealing with the Health Board because of fears that the disclosure of information could damage them commercially. In turn this could then jeopardise the Health Board's ability to compete fairly and pursue its function to bring forward development in the area and obtain value for money. It was therefore decided that it was not in the public's interest to disclose this information.

**3a) Please state how many healthcare staff shifts at your trust were filled by agency staff in each of the following financial years:**

Year	Total	On framework	Off framework
<b>i) 2017/18</b>	17,569	17,569	0
<b>ii) 2018/19</b>	25,636	25,636	0
<b>iii) 2019/20</b>	25,607	25,607	0
<b>iv) 2020/21</b>	23,558	23,477	81
<b>v) 2021/22</b>	32,371	31,616	755
<b>vi) 2022/23 to date</b>	47,682	47,528	154

**3b) For each year, please provide a breakdown of the number by the shifts covered by**

- i) On framework agency staff**
- ii) Off framework agency staff**

Please see above.