

Ref: FOI/GS/ID 8559

Please reply to:
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Trust Management
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30 October 2023

Freedom of Information Act 2000

I am writing in response to your request for information made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in relation to the microbiology laboratory service and blood cultures.

You asked: All questions are shown as received by the Trust.

- 1. Please table the hospitals or other acute sites currently submitting blood cultures and for each site-*
 - i) Are blood cultures incubated and/or processed on site or sent to a microbiology laboratory off site?*
 - ii) If incubated or processed off site, what is the distance in miles between the site and the offsite laboratory?*
 - iii) How many blood culture sets were submitted from each site in 2022/23?*
 - iv) Number of bed days for all patients per site*
- 2. Does the Trust follow the UK Standards for Microbiology Investigations (SMI S12) in relation to Blood Cultures? YES/NO*
- 3. Do you undertake formal compliance audits of the recommended pre-analytical standard for blood cultures of a four hour TAT from collection to incubation? YES/NO*
- 4. What percentage of blood culture sets achieved this standard in the year 2022/23 at each site.*
 - a. If full compliance with the pre analytical standard cannot be met, are clinicians made aware of the risk via a statement in the report on specimens which encountered delay?*
- 5. What is the population served by the Trust?*
- 6. What was the total expenditure on laboratory services (directorate of pathology) as a percentage of total Trust expenditure in the year 2022/23?*
- 7. Please append a copy of your blood culture protocol or policy or other document which informs clinical staff when they should take a blood culture.*

Trust response:

1.

	Name of acute site	Blood incubated on-site? Y/N	Blood processed on-site? Y/N	Distance to off-site lab in miles	No. cultures submitted 2022/2023 Adults and Paeds	Number of bed days 2022/2023
1	Tunbridge Wells Hospital	N	N	14 miles	8232	Total no patient days in hospital 141537
2	Maidstone Hospital	y	y	NA	6077	Ave. occupancy 108446

2. Yes

3. Yes

4. Not separated by site. Total 40%

a. NO

5. Around 760,000 people living in the south of West Kent and the north of East Sussex.

6. The Trust is applying Section 43 to this question.

7. See attached