

## Freedom of Information Request Reference

### **1. To ask who in the NHSCT authorised & directed that an interim abortion service be established.**

The NHSCT Executive Team agreed the implementation of an interim pathway for Early Medical Abortion.

### **2. To ask how many notifications of termination of pregnancies have been sent to Chief Medical Officer since the Abortion Regulations became legal on 31 March 2020.**

There were 197 notifications of termination of pregnancies sent to Chief Medical Officer for the period 31 March 2020 to 5 October 2020.

### **3. To ask for a breakdown of Trust locations of the notifications of termination of pregnancies under the Abortion Regulations.**

Northern Health and Social Care premises, as stipulated by the Chief Medical Officer are located according to type of treatment required.

The Northern H&SC Trust considers that a breakdown of Trust locations is exempt from disclosure under Section 38 (Health and Safety), of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Section 38 permits the withholding of information if there is a risk to Health and Safety of Individuals. To withhold there must be a likelihood of endangerment to the physical or mental health of any individual.

Section 38 is a qualified exemption. This means that the Trust has a duty to consider whether the disclosure should nevertheless be made in the public interest and must outline the Public interest/endangerment test.

The Trust considered any public interest factors which would influence the application of the exemption.

The Trust has balanced the factors for release:

1. In the interests of openness, transparency and accountability for how The Trust conducts its business.

Against the factors for withholding the information:

1. The potential risk of harm to Trust staff facilitating this service.
2. The potential risk of harm to individuals attending for this service.
3. The potential breach of an individual's right to privacy and dignity when attending for this service.

Given the highly sensitive nature of this issue and the Trust's duty of care to its staff and patients/clients, the Trust considers that to release this information could

potentially endanger the mental health and/or the physical safety of both its staff and patients/clients.

On balance, the Public Interest Test is weighted towards the application of the exemption; therefore the Trust will not be providing this information.

**4. To ask who provided the forms for the notification of termination of pregnancies.**

The Department of Health provided these forms.