

Ref. No: 2236
Date: 18/12/25
Subject: Trust spends on dispensing over-the-counter medicines

REQUEST

1. Can you tell me how much the trust spends on dispensing over-the-counter (OTC) medicines please.
2. Can you also tell me the top 10 OTC Medicines which are dispensed please.
3. If this can be broken down into IP, OP & Accident & Emergency that would also be useful.

RESPONSE

Section 12: cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit

Following a thorough assessment, we regret to inform you that Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust is unable to comply with your request, as doing so would exceed the cost limit set out under **Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000**.

Section 12 states that a public authority is not obliged to comply with a request for information if it estimates that the cost of doing so would exceed the **appropriate limit**, which is currently set at **£450** for NHS organisations. This equates to **18 hours of staff time**, calculated at a standard rate of £25 per hour, as defined in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004.

In this case, fulfilling your request would require 110 plus hours of extracting the information from records. In addition we cannot match drug lines OTC status without trawling through each record individually. The Trust has estimated that locating, retrieving, and extracting the relevant information would significantly exceed the 18-hour threshold, even with reasonable efforts to narrow the scope.

We are therefore applying Section 12 of the Act and will not be proceeding with the request in its current form.

However, we would be happy to assist you in refining your request to bring it within the cost limit. For example, narrowing the timeframe, specifying particular departments, or focusing on a specific aspect of the information may help reduce the burden of compliance.

Please let us know if you would like support in revising your request.