

Translation Services and Technologies

Reference Number: RDF2042-23

Date of Answer: 17/11/23

Further to your Freedom of Information Act request, please find the Trust's Answer: (s) below:

Please be aware that the Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (Royal Devon) has existed since 1st April 2022 following the integration of the Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust (known as Northern Services) and the Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust (known as Eastern Services).

We are interested in learning more about the use of translation services and technology in the public sector.

Please find attached a list of questions as a Freedom of Information (Fol) request, on the use, training and policies regarding translation services and technology in your organisation. If you have any reference materials relevant to your Answer: s, please refer to these in your answers and also provide those as attachments alongside the completed form.

- 1 *What is the size of the resident population that your organisation serves?*
Answer: Total: 542,404.
- 1.1 *What percentage of the resident population in the area that your organisation serves are non-native English speakers?*
Answer: The Trust does not hold this information, please contact Devon's Integrated Care Board (ICB) <https://onedevon.org.uk/>
- 1.2 *Does your organisation predict that the number of non-native English speakers living in the area that you serve will increase, reduce or stay the same in the next 5 years?*
Answer: The Trust does not hold the information.
- 2 *Does your organisation hire any professional written translation or spoken interpreting services to aid communication with people who may have difficulties understanding English?*
Answer: Yes.
- 2.1 *If your organisation hires professional translation or interpreting services, for what type of material do you use these services? (E.g., do you hire professional translation services to translate website content, correspondence, legal documents? Do you hire interpreting services for meetings, interviews, anything else?)*
Answer: A broad range of options, including service user translation, documents, Meetings depends on the need. Wherever there are interpretation requirements we will access the translation services.

2.2 *If your organisation hires professional translation or interpreting services, can you please provide figures for how much was spent by your organisation on these services and what percentage of your total expenditure this amounted to for the last 4 financial years?*

Answer: Please see table below representing Royal Devon's Eastern & Northern Services.

Financial year	Translation & interpreting expenditure	% of total expenditure
<i>2018/19: Northern</i>	£10,187	0.01%
<i>2018/19: Eastern</i>	£176,389	0.4%
<i>2019/20: Northern</i>	£11,127	0.02%
<i>2019/20: Eastern</i>	£203,699	0.4%
<i>2020/21: Northern</i>	£12,981	0.02%
<i>2020/21: Eastern</i>	£95,545	0.2%
<i>2021/22: Northern</i>	£25,582	0.03%
<i>2021/22: Eastern</i>	£165,705	0.3%

2.3 *Does your organisation predict that the percentage of spending on translation and interpreting services will increase, reduce or stay the same in the next 5 years?*

Answer: Reduce, this is based on planned improvement work to move to move to a more digital service.

3 *Is machine translation (e.g. a translation app such as Google Translate) used in any way in your organisation?*

Answer: Yes, although not recommended but is used ad hoc.

3.1 *If machine translation is used in your organisation, under what circumstances is it used? (Please specify by whom, in which context, using which tools, and the reason of use.)*

Answer: As per question 3, Google translation application.

4 *Does your organisation follow a formal policy approving, prohibiting or regulating the use of machine translation tools in your organisation?*

Answer: No.

4.1 *If your organisation follows a formal policy for the use of machine translation, can you attach a copy of such policy and/or provide a link to where it can be accessed?*

Answer: This is not identified in our current policy.

5 *Has your organisation carried out a risk assessment of possible consequences, for your organisation and/or for the people the organisation serves, from the use of machine translation?*

Answer: No.

5.1 *If your organisation has carried out a risk assessment of the use of machine translation, please can you specify the risks your organisation identified?*

Answer: Not applicable.

6 *Do you have an established line of accountability in the event of negative outcomes that may arise from the use of machine translation? (E.g., an incident caused by misinformation in an important document, or by miscommunication between staff and member of the public using a phone app.)*

Answer: Yes.

6.1 *If you have an established line of accountability, can you explain how this guides response procedures to a possible negative outcome from the use of machine translation?*

Answer: The Trust does not hold this information.

7 *Is any training provided on the use of machine translation in your organisation?*

Answer: No.

7.1 *If training is provided on the use of machine translation in your organisation, can you please provide an overview of the training offered?*

Answer: Not applicable.

8 *Does your organisation have any other procedures in place to adjust your communication strategy for people who may have difficulties understanding English? If so, please explain.*

Answer: Currently developing overarching communication policy to support communication with service users across a variety of mediums. We are also accredited with Communication Access UK and are supportive of the principles within the training programme.

9 *If we would like to follow up with your organisation for the purpose of further research relating to translation and/or interpreting in your organisation, could you please provide the most suitable email address to contact?*

Answer: rduh.pals-northern@nhs.net