

24 June 2022

Social Care Charges Debt Recovery

I am sending this request under the Freedom of Information Act to ask for the following information.

Note: In Northern Ireland, no charges are made for domiciliary care services. The figures below relate to self-funding clients in Belfast Health and Social Care Trust managed supported living facilities. Unfortunately, our finance systems do not hold the information by client age category.

- 1. How many adults – excluding those living in a care home - were billed* for s.14 social care charges for long-term care and support in the following financial years? Please break down the figures into those aged 18-64 and those aged 65+ for each. * *Please include those who were billed but have not yet paid.***

i) 2019/20	69 clients
ii) 2020/21	56 clients
iii) 2021/22	56 clients

- 2. How many adults – excluding those living in a care home - had debt management procedures commenced against them for the non-payment of s14 social care charges for long-term care and support in the following financial years? This includes individuals contacted at any stage of the debt recovery process. Please break down the figures into those aged 18-64 and those aged 65+ for each. This may include individuals who are now deceased.**

i) 2019/20	None (an invoice goes out as 1 st point of contact to customer to inform them of amount owed but this debt is lifted via direct debit so no further credit control procedures applied)
ii) 2020/21	None (an invoice goes out as 1 st point of contact to customer to inform them of amount owed but this debt is lifted via direct debit so no further credit control procedures applied)
iii) 2021/22	None (an invoice goes out as 1 st point of contact to customer to inform them of amount owed but this debt is lifted via direct debit so no further credit control procedures applied)

- 3. As of 1 April 2022 (or at the time of responding to this FOI, if data for 1 April 2022 is not available), how many adults – excluding those living in a care home - were involved in a debt recovery process for the non-payment of s14 social care charges for long-term care and support? This includes individuals at any stage of the debt recovery process. Please break down the figures into those aged 18-64 and those aged 65+, and how much was owed in total by these individuals to the local authority. This may include individuals who are now deceased.**

None

24 June 2022

4. In the following financial years, how many adults have had legal action brought against them for the non-payment of s14 social care charges for long-term care and support? Please break down the figures into those aged 18-64 and those aged 65+ for each. This may include individuals who are now deceased.

i) 2019/20 None
ii) 2020/21 None
iii) 2021/22 None

5. In how many of those cases in answers 4i, 4ii and 4iii has this resulted in criminal action being taken? Please break down the figures by the following financial years, and into those aged 18-64 and those aged 65+ for each:

i) 2019/20 None
ii) 2020/21 None
iii) 2021/22 None

6. Is your debt recovery process, with regard to s14 social care charges, currently managed internally (i.e. within the local authority) or externally (i.e. by a private company instructed by the local authority)? Please explain.

The Business Services Organisation (Shared Services) manage the debt recovery processes on behalf of Belfast Health and Social Care Trust. BSO is a public sector organisation established by Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland so, while external to Belfast Trust as an entity, it is internal to Health and Social Care.

6b. If the debt recovery process is currently managed externally, what is the name of the private company or companies currently being instructed by the council?

See answer to question 6.

7. In how many cases, where an adult – excluding those living in a care home - has had debt management procedures against them for the non-payment of s14 social care charges for long-term care and support, has the local authority waived those debts in the following financial years? Please break down the figures into those aged 18-64 and those aged 65+ for each. This may include individuals who are now deceased.

i) 2019/20 None
ii) 2020/21 None
iii) 2021/22 None