

Freedom of Information Act 2000

The Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust Response to Information request

Date Request Received: 27th May 2025

FOI Ref No 28986

Requested Information:

For the years 2023/2024 and 2024/2025:

1. How much did your authority spend on confectionery (including chocolate, crisps, sweets, cakes, etc) and sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs) for resale to patients, staff, and the public?
2. What was the approximate percentage mark up for the items referred to in question 1?
3. How much profit did your authority make from the sale of items referred to in question 1?

Response:

1. Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust (RCHT) are not able to clearly identify what is sold for retail and what is provided to the wards for use in snack boxes and for other uses where a charge is not made. These products are also purchased as part of deliveries with many other non-confectionary lines. It would take a significant amount of time to unpick the invoices, as well as a manual review of every line item that may have been recharged to a ward or provided for other means. Please see appendix one.
2. This information is considered to be commercially sensitive. Please see appendix two.
3. Please see the answer to question 2.

Attachment(s):

Appendix one:

Further to your request for information dated **27th May 2025**, I can confirm that the Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust holds information that falls within the description specified in your request. However, we estimate that the costs of complying with your request would exceed the cost limit. The cost limit is specified in regulations and for the Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust this is set at £450. The cost limit represents the estimated cost of one person spending 18 working hours in

determining whether the Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust hold the information, locating, retrieving, and extracting the information. Consequently, the Trust is not obliged under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to respond to your request, and we will not be processing your request further. **The information you have requested is not held centrally and would therefore require a manual review of every line item that may have been recharged to a ward or provided for other means, as well as a manual review of the invoices.**

We cannot identify a way to narrow the scope of the manual search that would be required to determine what is being asked. I have therefore estimated that it would exceed the appropriate limit to proceed with your request.

I apologise that we are unable to fully assist you in this instance.

If you wish to discuss any of the above, please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our decision, you should write to the Information Governance Manager, Kedhlow Building, Royal Cornwall Hospital, Truro, Cornwall, TR1 3LJ or e-mail rch-tr.FOI@nhs.net

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint or review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the Royal Cornwall Hospital.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:
Information Commissioner's Office

Wycliffe House

Water Lane

Wilmslow

Cheshire

SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113 or 01625 54 57 45

www.ico.org.uk

Appendix two:

Section 43 (2) - Commercial Sensitivity (qualified)

Regarding your request for the approximate percentage mark up for the items referred to in question 1 and how much profit the authority made from the sale of items referred to in question 1, the Royal Cornwall Hospital Trust have considered this part of your request and after careful consideration, have concluded that the information requested is exempt from disclosure under Section 43 (2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000:

43 (2) Information is exempt from disclosure under this Act as it would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the public authority holding it). Providing this information would make our profit margins identifiable and therefore provide insight into our business models.

Exemption 43 (2) is a qualified exemption and the Royal Cornwall Hospital Trust have fully considered the balance of public interest and are satisfied that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it. The Trust considers that there is a real likelihood of harm arising to both its own commercial interests.

Date Response sent: 18th June 2025