FOI 3305

Date 06/11/2024

Dear Requester,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request. Please note, this is a cross-site response for Bedford site and Luton site.

You asked:

I am writing to submit a Freedom of Information (FOI) request concerning the procurement and award of contracts under Lot 1 of the Workforce Alliance RM6281 framework for temporary clinical and healthcare staffing. I would appreciate your assistance in providing the following information:

1. Direct Award Method:

**Has your Trust employed the direct award method for sourcing workers or small groups of workers under the RM6281 framework? If so, please provide evidence demonstrating that the selected suppliers offered the most economically advantageous terms in accordance with the framework’s guidelines.**

The trust uses a number of NHSE approved frameworks and will work with the Framework provider to ensure that appropriate call-offs are in place.

**What measures does your Trust implement to ensure transparency and fairness in direct award decisions, including maintaining a clear audit trail?**

The trust works with the framework provider by staff type who will share analysed detail of suppliers approved under the appropriate framework lot by performance and cost.

1. Further Competition:

**Has your Trust used the further competition process for awarding contracts where adjustments to the framework terms were necessary or where commercial benefits could be achieved? Please provide documentation detailing:**

* **The identification of the relevant lot.**
* **Invitations sent to all capable suppliers.**
* **Evaluation criteria used to determine the most economically advantageous tender.**
* **Evidence of a fair and transparent evaluation process.**

The trust uses a number of NHSE approved frameworks and will work with the Framework provider to ensure that appropriate call-off’s are in place as per the terms of the framework we will work with the framework provider by staff type who will share analysed detail of suppliers approved under the appropriate framework lot by performance and cost.

1. Neutral or Master Vendor:

If your Trust utilizes a neutral or master vendor to manage temporary staffing, how do you ensure these vendors comply with the framework’s requirements, including the Public Contracts Regulations 2015? Please provide evidence of compliance with the framework’s rules for transparency, fairness, and economic advantage.

What processes are in place to monitor and audit the actions of neutral or master vendors?

The trust does not currently use either of these models

1. Supplier Selection and Exclusion:

Please explain how your Trust lawfully selects certain suppliers while excluding others under the RM6281 framework. What justifications are used for these decisions, and how do you ensure compliance with the framework and procurement regulations?

The trust uses a number of NHSE approved frameworks. The trust works with the framework provider to ensure that appropriate call-offs are in place as per the terms of the relevant framework and NHSE agency rules.

1. Processes for Supplier Selection:

Could you outline the process your Trust follows when selecting suppliers for temporary clinical and healthcare staff under RM6281? This should include the decision-making steps for choosing between direct awards, further competition, or engaging a neutral/master vendor.

The Trust uses a number of NHSE approved frameworks ensures that appropriate call-offs are in place as per the terms of the framework. The trust works with the framework provider by staff type who will share analysed detail of suppliers approved under the appropriate framework lot by performance and cost.

Please provide contact details for the department responsible for handling legal queries related to procurement under the framework.

Exempt under Section 40 – Personal Information

1. Additional Information:

The total number of agencies listed under Lot 1 and the rates at which they supply their services.

304 Agencies, rates are commercially sensitive

The name of the master or neutral vendor managing shift allocation.

N/A

If your Trust is not using the Workforce Alliance RM6281 framework, please specify which framework is currently in use.

Also use RM6161, H.T.E TWS II.

This information is provided for your personal use and is the property of Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust and subject to any existing Intellectual Property and Database Rights. Any commercial application or use of this information may be subject to the provisions of the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015 (RPSI). This means that if you wish to re-use the information provided for commercial purposes for any reason you must ask the Trust for permission to do so.

Please note that the Trust has a formal internal review and complaints process which is managed by the Information Governance Manager/Data Protection Officer. Should you have any concerns with our response, you can make a formal request for an internal review. Requests for internal review should be submitted within three months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter, and should be addressed to: dataprotectionofficer@ldh.nhs.uk. This option is available to you for up to three calendar months from the date your response was issued.

If you are not satisfied with the Trust review under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 you may apply directly to the Information Commissioners Officer (ICO) for a review of your appeal decision. The ICO can be contacted at: ICO, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF www.ico.org.uk

Yours sincerely,

*FOI Officer*

Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust