

Freedom of Information Request

Reference Number: [EPUT.FOI.24.3722](#)

Date Received: 10/09/2024

Information Requested:

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.

Yes –through contact with all the agencies on the framework and using the supplier matrix we have identified which agencies are able to supply the areas in which we operate and are able to supply the appropriate trained and skilled staff. Due to the specialities operated within the Trust additional training/skills are required above the framework provision for many of roles that may require agency fill – Depending on the profession and length of use for some areas candidates may be required to participate in a selection process to ensure the best candidate is engaged.

Shift availability is provided to all these agencies at the same time via our temporary staffing system. Allocation is based on response time to request and urgency of need, suitability of the worker put forward and price point.

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

Evidence of all shifts being sent to agencies, confirmation of NHS Agency rule compliance and rates and evidence of training / skills / CV to assess suitability of worker. The Rate card and award support tool and Simplified short order form may also be utilised as part of the selection process.

2. 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.

N/a – further competition not utilised

3. Neutral or Master Vendor: N/a no neutral or master vendor in place

- 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?

4. 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?

Suppliers are only excluded where they are unable to supply suitable trained and skilled workers in the areas in which we operate. Assessment will be made through discussion with supplier or utilising the Supplier skills, regions and branches matrix.

5. 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 award, further competition, or engaging a neutral/master vendor. [Please see Q1 and Q4 response. The Trust only uses Direct Award](#)
- Please provide contact details for the department responsible for handling legal queries related to procurement under the framework.

Richard Whiteside
Head of procurement
richard.whiteside2@nhs.net

6. Additional Information:

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

This information is available on <https://workforcealliance.nhs.uk/>

- 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. N/a

Publication Scheme:

As part of the Freedom of Information Act all public organisations are required to proactively publish certain classes of information on a Publication Scheme. A publication scheme is a guide to the information that is held by the organisation. EPUT's Publication Scheme is located on its Website at the following link <https://eput.nhs.uk>