

## Freedom of Information Act Request

1. *Does your Trust hold a record or inventory of medical-grade freezer units used for the storage of biological, histopathology, research, or biobanking tissue samples?*
  1. *If yes, please provide the (a) number of units and (b) storage temperature category (for example -20°C, -80°C)*
  
2. *Are any of these freezer units currently used for the rapid freezing and/or long-term storage of brain tissue samples?*
  1. *If yes, please state (a) the number of units used for brain tissue and (b) the typical storage temperature used.*
  
3. *Regardless of current use, does the Trust have freezer units capable of supporting fresh- or flash-frozen brain tissue storage that is suitable for therapeutic development.*
  1. *Does the Trust currently have access to rapid freezing equipment suitable for brain tissue?*
  
4. *Only if feasible within the FOI time and cost limit, please indicate whether any existing freezer unit in the Trust could be repurposed or shared between departments to enable brain tissue storage or expand current capacity.*

Pathology services at Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (DBTH) are provided under a novated managed service arrangement by Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. Under this arrangement, responsibility for the operation, management, and governance of pathology services—including laboratories, equipment, storage facilities, information systems, and associated processes—sits with Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

As a result of this novated arrangement, DBTH does not hold recorded information relating to the operation or assets of pathology services, including:

- Inventories of medical-grade freezer units used for biological, histopathology, research, or biobanking tissue storage
- Temperature categories or specifications of such freezer units
- The use or availability of rapid or flash-freezing equipment for brain tissue
- The capability of pathology storage facilities to support therapeutic development of fresh- or flash-frozen tissue
- Any arrangements for the repurposing or sharing of pathology freezer capacity

Under section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, a public authority is required to confirm whether it holds the information requested. As DBTH does not hold the information in scope of your request due to the novated managed service arrangement, it is unable to provide the information requested.

You may wish to direct your request to Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, who are the public authority responsible for holding this information.

[sth.foi@nhs.net](mailto:sth.foi@nhs.net)

Our Ref: 48  
January 2026

If you are not satisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to request an internal review. Requests for an internal review should be submitted within 40 working days from the date of this response, and should be addressed to [d.wraith@nhs.net](mailto:d.wraith@nhs.net).

If you remain dissatisfied after the internal review, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). The ICO can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF  
Tel: 0303 123 1113  
Website: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/>

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