

Reference Number: FOI202223/152
From: Commercial
Date: 04 July 2022
Subject: Tongue tie service provision and benchmarking

Q1 Please provide a response to the attached list of questions

A1 [Please see attached document: *FOI 152 Response*](#)

We are carrying out a survey of NHS tongue-tie services for babies. This will create a more accurate national picture of services and help in achieving improved provision of breastfeeding support.

Please complete the following questions. Your time in completing it is greatly appreciated.

1. What is your name and role within the trust?

(Write in)

Your name	Rachel Rowson-Hills
Role within the Trust	Service Manager

2. What is the name of your NHS trust?

(Write in)

Alder Hey Children's Foundation Trust

3. How many babies were born in your trust in 2021?

(Write in)

Zero – The Trust does not provide maternity services

4. Is there currently an NHS tongue-tie division in your trust?

(Please tick one)

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Proceed to question 7</i>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Proceed to question 5</i>

5. If there is no tongue-tie division service in your Trust, do you have a referral pathway to a service (e.g. which may be private or located in another Trust)?

(Please tick one)

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Proceed to question 6</i>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Proceed to question 7</i>

6. How many referrals were made to this service in 2021?

(or a recent 12 month period)?

(Write in)

Not applicable

7. How many babies were referred for possible division?

(Write in)

1,440

8. How many babies actually had an NHS tongue tie division in your Trust in 2021?

(Write in)

737

Any comment to add?

9. Who is the service run by?

(Please tick as many as apply)

Midwives	<input type="checkbox"/>
Paediatricians	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lactation consultants	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ear Nose and Throat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maxillofacial	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health Visitors	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please Specify)	<i>Nurse led service led by specialist nursing team</i>

10. For funding purposes what is the tongue tie release coded as?

(Write in)

Frenotomy

11. Do you accept out-of-area referrals?

(Please tick one)

Yes

No	
Don't know	

12. What are the criteria for referral?

(Please tick as many as apply)

Weight loss /poor weight gain	X
Obvious Tongue tie	X
Maternal pain and nipple damage	X
Slow messy bottle feeder	X
Feeding for long periods and often despite breastfeeding support'	

13. Do you accept referrals for formula fed babies?

(Please tick one)

Yes	X
No	

14. Does your service divide tongue--ties described as posterior/sub--mucosal?

(Please tick one)

Yes	
No	X
Don't know	

15. What is the usual waiting time between referral and appointment with the tongue--tie service?

(Write in)

3 to 4 weeks we have but we have urgent slots each week

16. What is the maximum age for babies to be referred to the service?

(Write in)

6 months

17. Does your service use any specific assessment tool?

(Please tick as many as apply)

Hazelbaker	
Tabby	
Martinelli	
Clinical Judgement	X
Other	

18. Is specialist breastfeeding support available for mothers and babies immediately after a tongue--tie division?

(Please tick one)

Yes	Yes at Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust Certain clinics at Alder Hey
No	
Don't know	

19. What follow up do the mothers and babies have after division?

(Please tick one)

Clinic review	
Phone call or text	
None unless requested	x

20. When does that review occur?

(Please tick one)

Next day	
A few days	
1 week	
2 weeks	
3 weeks	
1 month	
Other	Upon request

21. What aftercare is recommended?

(Please tick as many as apply)

<p>LEVEL 1 No intervention, feeding the baby as usual Other than observing for any bleeding or signs of infection no other action is taken</p>	
<p>LEVEL 2 Feeding the baby as usual and also encouraging parents to do ‘tongue exercises’ with the baby These exercises might include: Encouraging baby to suck a clean finger and withdraw the finger slowly in a ‘tug of war’ game; running a clean finger along baby’s lower gums to encourage sideways tongue movement; parent(s) sticking their tongue out at the baby to encourage the baby to mimic the action. These are detailed on the current ATP ‘Care After Tongue-Tie Division (Frenulotomy)’ leaflet.</p>	
<p>LEVEL 3 Encouraging ‘tongue lifting’ The parent is encouraged to insert either one or two of their fore fingers under the baby’s tongue, with the finger tips at each side of the wound and lifts the tongue upwards enough to stretch the wound site. Touching the wound site itself is not encouraged.</p>	
<p>LEVEL 4 Active wound management (AWM) or disruptive wound massage/management (DWM) This involves using a clean finger(s) in a ‘sweeping’, rubbing or circulate motion (massaging) across the opened wound site. Sometimes including stretching or opening the wound in addition</p>	
<p>Other</p>	<p>We provide our own after care leaflet.</p>

22. In comparison to pre-COVID (March 2020) have the number of tongue tie referrals....?

(Please tick one)

...increased	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
... stayed the same	<input type="checkbox"/>
... decreased	<input type="checkbox"/>

23. In comparison to pre-COVID (March 2020) has your waiting list....?

(Please tick one)

...increased	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
... stayed the same	<input type="checkbox"/>
... decreased	<input type="checkbox"/>

24. In comparison to pre-COVID (March 2020) have your criteria for referral changed?

(Please tick one)

No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, please specify	

25. Has COVID had any other impact on your service?

(Please tick one)

No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If yes, please specify	We still provide a service but with social distancing we saw less babies and parents per clinic

26. If you would be happy to be contacted for further details about the tongue tie services in your area, please give your email address.

(Write in)

Having considered this question we do not deem that it meets the criteria for a valid request for information under the FOIA, as it is asking for perspective and opinion rather

than recorded data or information held by the Trust i.e. it does not 'describe the information being requested'.

27. If you have any further comments relating to this survey or tongue tie services generally, please use the box below

(Write in)

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28. Would you like a copy of the report when it is finished?

(Please tick one)

No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Many thanks for completing the survey. Your time in completing it is much appreciated. The data will create a more accurate national picture of services and help in achieving improved provision of breastfeeding support.