



Trust Headquarters
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Crawley
West Sussex
RH10 9BG

11th July 2025
Internal Ref: 250626
Email:

Tel: 0300 123 0999
www.secamb.nhs.uk

Dear ,

The trust acknowledges receipt of your Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) request, referenced above. Please ensure you quote this number in any future correspondence.

FOI Request

You asked us:

Q1. For the following years, please indicate how many people were pronounced dead following the arrival of an ambulance (Dead on Arrival)?

2025 (So Far)
2024
2023
2022
2021

Q2. Of these people, how many deaths were attributed to drug related causes?

2025 (So Far)
2024
2023
2022
2021

Q3. Of these people, how many deaths involved an opioid/opiate?

2025 (So Far)
2024
2023
2022
2021

Formal Response

The Trust confirms it holds part of the information you have requested.



Saving Lives,
Serving Our Communities

Chair: Michael Whitehouse CEO: Simon Weldon

Q1. For the following years, please indicate how many people were pronounced dead following the arrival of an ambulance (Dead on Arrival)?

Year	Count
2021	3287
2022	3514
2023	3934
2024	2686
2025	577
Total	13998

Please note the following caveats regarding the above data:

The count provided in response to Q1 is validated totals, for attended incidents, where no meaningful attempt at cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) was made, where the patient was recorded as being beyond medical help. This is the closest dataset available, to match your request for 'dead on arrival'.

SECamb operatives do not 'pronounce' or certify patient death. They may make an assessment of; a patient's vitals and observations, viability of attempting or continuing with CPR, patient wishes or recorded declarations, and many other factors drawn from clinical and operational guidelines and experience. If the result of the assessment is a decision not to attempt CPR, this will be recorded by the operative. This data will likely be validated under the classification 'beyond medical help'.

In April 2024, the Trust changed the classification of patients beyond medical help, where they also had a record declaration known as 'Do not attempt resuscitation' (DNAR). Before this date, if a patient was beyond medical help (e.g. had rigor), and had a DNAR, this would be recorded as beyond medical help. From this date forward, the recording of a patient's DNAR is now prioritised; some patients who would previously have been classified as beyond medical help are now classified as DNAR patients. The registry where this 'reason for no resuscitation' data is validated records only one of these two options. This accounts for the marked decrease in the number of patients recorded as beyond medical help for 2024 compared to previous years.

Q2. Of these people, how many deaths were attributed to drug related causes?

Q3. Of these people, how many deaths involved an opioid/opiate?

The Trust cannot provide an output for Q2 or Q3. Clinical causation data for patients beyond medical help is not validated alongside the 'reason for no resuscitation' figures.

Next steps

We publish a variety of information which may assist future enquiries relating to our service on our website – www.secamb.nhs.uk.



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Should you be dissatisfied with our response then in the first instance please contact Richard Banks, Head of Corporate Governance, via the following email address: FOI@secamb.nhs.uk

You can ask us to review our original response. If you would like us to carry out an internal review, please let us know within 40 working days of you receiving our original response. This review will be conducted by an individual who was not directly involved in reviewing the original response, ordinarily, the Trust Data Protection Officer. We will endeavour to complete this request within 20 working days.

Should you remain dissatisfied then you can contact the [Information Commissioner's Office](https://www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints) (ICO). Complaints to the ICO should be made within six weeks of receiving the outcome of an internal review. The easiest way to lodge a complaint is through their website: www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints.

Alternatively, the ICO's postal address is:
Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely,

Freedom of Information Coordinator
South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust



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