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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:

I am writing under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to request information regarding your Trust's use of restorative justice or restorative practices, particularly in the context of sexual safety incidents and patient complaints, and your interpretation and implementation of the NHS England Sexual Safety in Healthcare Charter (2023).

Definitions and Context

Restorative justice (RJ) refers to voluntary, facilitated processes that bring together those harmed and those responsible for harm to acknowledge what happened, understand its impact, and agree on steps to repair it. Common restorative practices include apology meetings, restorative conferences or circles, and dialogue-based resolution procedures. NHS Resolution's *Being Fair* guidance (2019) encourages such restorative approaches as part of developing a "just and learning culture" in healthcare settings.

Request

Please respond to the following questions:

1. NHS Sexual Safety in Healthcare Charter

a) Has your Trust signed up to the NHS England *Sexual Safety in Healthcare Charter* (2023)?



b) If yes:

- Please confirm the date of adoption

2. Provide any internal implementation plans, policy updates, or cultural change programmes associated with the Charter

c) Does your Trust interpret the Charter's emphasis on person-centred and trauma-informed approaches as including or supporting the use of restorative practices?

3. Restorative Practices in Complaint Resolution

a) Does your Trust use dialogue-based or restorative approaches in patient complaints more generally (e.g., apology meetings, mediation, facilitated dialogue)?

b) If yes, please describe the approach and provide any supporting documents.

4. Use of Restorative Justice or Restorative Practice

a) Has your Trust ever used restorative justice or restorative practices in the context of:

- Sexual harassment, assault, or misconduct involving staff or patients?
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- Patient complaints involving interpersonal harm or conflict?

b) If yes to either, please provide:

- A brief description of the approach used
- Any relevant policies, procedures, or internal guidance
- Any staff training materials relating to restorative practice
- Any available summary evaluations or outcome reports without any identifying details included.

Formal Response

The Trust confirms it holds the information you have requested.

1.NHS Sexual Safety in Healthcare Charter

a) Has your Trust signed up to the NHS England *Sexual Safety in Healthcare Charter* (2023)?

Yes



Saving Lives,
Serving Our Communities

Chair: Michael Whitehouse CEO: Simon Weldon

b) If yes:

- **Please confirm the date of adoption**

December 2023

- **Provide any internal implementation plans, policy updates, or cultural change programmes associated with the Charter**

The Chief Nurse took on the role of Sexual Violence and Domestic Abuse Lead for the Trust and a Sexual Safety policy was developed. We have strengthened the reporting and investigation mechanisms for sexual harassment cases, have introduced improved data collection to provide greater transparency on prevalence and colleagues' experiences, and have also provided training to managers so we can be assured that when people do come forward, cases will be dealt with appropriately and consistently.

c) Does your Trust interpret the Charter's emphasis on person-centred and trauma-informed approaches as including or supporting the use of restorative practices?

Our Sexual Safety Policy reflects a commitment to fostering a culture of psychological safety, openness, and learning. While restorative practices such as apology meetings or facilitated dialogue are not mandated, they may be considered in specific circumstances—only where they are voluntary, safe, and led by the needs and preferences of the person harmed.

This approach aligns with the principles outlined in NHS Resolution's Being Fair guidance (2019), which encourages restorative and compassionate responses as part of a just and learning culture. Any such process would be carefully assessed to ensure it is trauma-informed, does not retraumatise individuals, and is supported by appropriate facilitation and safeguarding.

2 Restorative Practices in Complaint Resolution

a) Does your Trust use dialogue-based or restorative approaches in patient complaints more generally (e.g., apology meetings, mediation, facilitated dialogue)?

The Trust does offer to meet with complainants to discuss their concerns and opportunities for learning in person as appropriate or if requested by the complainant.

b) If yes, please describe the approach and provide any supporting documents.

The Trust does not follow a particular methodology or approach when meeting with complainants and will instead, determine requirements on an individual basis.



3. Use of Restorative Justice or Restorative Practice

a) Has your Trust ever used restorative justice or restorative practices in the context of:

- a. Sexual harassment, assault, or misconduct involving staff or patients?**

Please see response below.

- b. Patient complaints involving interpersonal harm or conflict?**

No.

b) If yes to either, please provide:

- c. A brief description of the approach used**

In terms of security and violence prevention and reduction, the Police use restorative justice as one of their sanctions where they feel that this is an appropriate judicial disposal. The victim, who will be the Trust member of staff will be updated of this sanction and the relevant police service will consult where necessary. The Trust do not have influence over the process and the policies and procedures would be relevant to the individual police services.

SECamb does not routinely use restorative justice in cases involving sexual harassment, assault, or misconduct. In line with trauma-informed principles and safeguarding responsibilities, such cases are typically managed through formal HR, safeguarding, or disciplinary procedures. Any consideration of restorative approaches would be subject to a rigorous risk assessment and would only proceed if it were safe, voluntary, and appropriate for all parties involved.

SECamb's Grievance Policy includes the use of facilitated discussions and mediation as part of informal conflict resolution. These practices are voluntary and aim to support early, person-centred resolution of interpersonal issues, including those raised by patients or staff. While not labelled as "restorative justice," these approaches reflect restorative principles and are aligned with the Trust's commitment to a just and learning culture.

- d. Any relevant policies, procedures, or internal guidance**

Sexual Safety Policy and Grievance policy are available on the SECamb public website

- e. Any staff training materials relating to restorative practice**



There is no specific training offered on restorative practice

f. Any available summary evaluations or outcome reports without any identifying details included.

Not-applicable.

Next steps

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

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](http://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**