



Trust Headquarters
Nexus House
4 Gatwick Road
Crawley
West Sussex
RH10 9BG

28th November 2025
Internal Ref: 251025
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:

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I would like to request copies of the following:

General sickness absence from 2020-2025:

1. The total number of staff sickness absence days taken each year, broken down by year from 2020-2025.

Categorisation of sickness absence:

2. Does your organisation code sickness absences by specific category or reason (e.g. 'mental health', 'burnout', 'flu', 'musculoskeletal issues')? If yes, please provide the breakdown for each recorded sickness category for each year in the five-year period (2020-2025).
3. If such categorisations have changed over time, please indicate when changes to categories or coding were implemented.

Locum and agency staff usage from 2020-2025:

4. The total number of locum or agency staff engaged in each year of the five-year period (2020-2025).
5. If records permit, please detail the total expenditure on locum or agency staff for each year.
6. If possible, please indicate whether the use of locum/agency staff was linked to covering staff sickness absences.

Formal Response

The Trust confirms it holds the information you have requested.



The figures provided are based on sickness absence expressed in full-time equivalent (FTE) days, as this is how the data is held in our reporting system. This method adjusts for different working patterns (such as part-time hours) to provide a consistent measure of days lost.

1. The total number of staff sickness absence days taken each year, broken down by year from 2020-2025.

Year (April to March)	FTE Days Lost
2020/21	101,445.64
2021/22	134,344.57
2022/23	131,288.40
2023/24	105,638.19
2024/25	112,131.06

2. Please provide the breakdown for each recorded sickness category for each year in the five-year period (2020-2025).

Absence Reason	FTE Days Lost				
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
S10 Anxiety / stress / depression / other psychiatric illnesses	21,337.79	28,060.11	28,873.42	24,806.73	26,222.54
S11 Back Problems	7,713.17	8,209.66	8,871.72	7,537.81	6,242.95
S12 Other musculoskeletal problems	7,200.88	10,893.48	9,051.49	8,505.43	9,282.40
S13 Cold, Cough, Flu - Influenza	1,626.17	4,442.87	7,922.39	8,046.42	9,275.07
S14 Asthma	173.14	314.46	174.36	253.63	331.22
S15 Chest & respiratory problems	31,071.06	35,054.27	24,533.78	6,060.08	6,045.87
S16 Headache / migraine	2,444.15	3,042.15	3,018.43	3,923.55	4,472.26
S17 Benign and malignant tumours, cancers	298.59	611.60	1,826.82	832.23	875.45
S18 Blood disorders	97.51	131.24	115.99	281.72	238.86
S19 Heart, cardiac & circulatory problems	1,095.05	2,655.88	2,052.39	1,072.09	2,484.93
S20 Burns, poisoning, frostbite, hypothermia	53.12	81.00	20.00	26.20	5.49
S21 Ear, nose, throat (ENT)	1,305.75	2,341.88	3,398.84	2,635.89	3,131.26
S22 Dental and oral problems	347.98	461.29	453.40	460.86	521.27
S23 Eye problems	450.39	536.05	895.38	906.35	1,035.32
S24 Endocrine / glandular problems	235.41	504.14	307.08	655.47	369.56
S25 Gastrointestinal problems	5,817.46	8,087.27	8,878.87	9,529.20	12,764.40
S26 Genitourinary & gynaecological disorders	1,982.79	2,236.80	2,406.92	2,681.43	4,235.42
S27 Infectious diseases	83.30	169.24	120.18	156.61	189.99
S28 Injury, fracture	5,127.88	6,223.57	9,020.71	6,540.79	5,359.66



S29 Nervous system disorders	207.12	466.28	431.48	352.51	159.13
S30 Pregnancy related disorders	1,161.25	2,409.83	1,860.79	2,763.80	2,680.87
S31 Skin disorders	428.45	793.69	553.65	457.39	413.44
S32 Substance abuse	26.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
S98 Other known causes - not elsewhere classified	8,782.80	12,311.07	12,016.35	12,397.19	11,367.92
S99 Unknown causes / Not specified	2,378.43	4,306.74	4,483.96	4,754.81	4,425.78

3. If such categorisations have changed over time, please indicate when changes to categories or coding were implemented.

Not applicable.

Locum and agency staff usage from 2020-2025:

4. The total number of locum or agency staff engaged in each year of the five-year period (2020-2025).

2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
68	85	71	84	84

5. If records permit, please detail the total expenditure on locum or agency staff for each year.

2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
£1,784,363	£2,880,754	£4,733,147	£2,422,429	£2,348,383

6. If possible, please indicate whether the use of locum/agency staff was linked to covering staff sickness absences.

The main reason for the use of agency is to cover vacancies.

Next steps

Please note you will be able to source a lot of information which is made available on our website.

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](#) (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**



Saving Lives,
Serving Our Communities

Chair: Michael Whitehouse CEO: Simon Weldon