

20<sup>th</sup> November 2025  
Internal Ref: 251040  
Email:

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 would like to request the following information under the Freedom of Information Act.**

- 1. Please tell me whether the trust has a policy of advising patients to make their own way to hospital at times of high demand?**
- 2. If yes to question 1, does this include calls initially triaged as Category 2?**
- 3. If yes to question 2, could this include a) suspected heart attacks or b) suspected strokes?**
- 4. If possible, please provide details of the policy outlined in the questions 1-3 above and specify whether call handlers or clinicians (or both) would give the advice.**

### **Formal Response**

The Trust confirms it holds the information you have requested.

**I would like to request the following information under the Freedom of Information Act.**

- 1. Please tell me whether the trust has a policy of advising patients to make their own way to hospital at times of high demand?**

Yes

- 2. If yes to question 1, does this include calls initially triaged as Category 2?**

Yes, this may include calls initially coded as Category 2 cases but may have been subsequently identified as potentially suitable following a clinical review of the available information in the call.

- 3. If yes to question 2, could this include a) suspected heart attacks or b) suspected strokes?**

These cases would not be identified as suitable to ask patients to make their own way if there was information in the call suggesting this was the presenting problem.

- 4. If possible, please provide details of the policy outlined in the questions 1-3 above and specify whether call handlers or clinicians (or both) would give the advice.**

This action is covered within our Clinical Safety Plan (CSP) under CSP level 2 where clinicians will review calls within the Category 3 and 4 group to determine if patients can be contacted to make their own way to ED based upon their presenting symptoms. In CSP level 3, a call handler may assist a clinician and undertake these calls. However, all cases will have been assessed and identified by the clinician in the first instance.

### **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](mailto: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](http://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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