



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

Tel: 0300 123 0999  
[www.secamb.nhs.uk](http://www.secamb.nhs.uk)

12th February 2026  
Internal Ref: 260201  
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**

I am a third-year paramedic degree apprentice at the University of Huddersfield. I am currently in the process of writing my dissertation on the use of therapy dogs in healthcare staff and the effects a therapy dog can have on staff mental health and wellbeing. I am seeking information from both hospital trusts and ambulance services to assess the transferability of these interventions into the ambulance service, notably into frontline clinical staff populations.

This is a freedom of information request for the following, please:

1. Does the trust/ambulance service utilise therapy dog intervention? If so, why or why not? Is there a specific reason why the trust/ambulance service has or has not utilised a therapy dog.
2. When did your trust/ambulance service first offer these interventions, is it ongoing? If they have ceased, why?
3. If your trust/ambulance service offers therapy dog intervention, what form does it take? Can you provide details on how staff access these interventions. For example, timings, setting, on an ad hoc basis or at specific times etc, etc.
4. Who exactly can access a therapy dog? Is it available to frontline staff/staff working in acute care situations? Or staff who are not patient facing? If it's for a specific population of workers and not available to frontline clinical staff, why?



5. Is there a specific reason why a dog is used? For example, for mental health, to improve staff wellbeing, etc.
6. If your trust/ambulance service doesn't use a dog, does the trust/ambulance service utilise any other animal intervention?
7. Please provide any details of barriers or limitations in the use of therapy dogs.
8. Does the trust/ambulance service collect any data surrounding the use of therapy dog intervention? If so, what? Please provide data, if you have it. Details on how the use of a therapy dog impacts staff wellbeing are particularly useful.
9. If your trust/ambulance service utilise a therapy dog, have you had improvements in staff mental health and wellbeing? Has there been an identifiable trend in staff sickness absence numbers etc.
10. Have staff provided feedback on such intervention? If so, please provide details. Furthermore, how were they recruited for their feedback, was it given voluntarily or requested? Additionally, was there a reasonable amount of feedback provided?
11. Does the trust/ambulance service have any policy, standard operating procedures or guidance on dog therapy or animal assisted interventions in the workplace? If so, please provide this.
12. Who provides therapy dog intervention?



## **Formal Response**

**I am a third-year paramedic degree apprentice at the University of Huddersfield. I am currently in the process of writing my dissertation on the use of therapy dogs in healthcare staff and the effects a therapy dog can have on staff mental health and wellbeing. I am seeking information from both hospital trusts and ambulance services to assess the transferability of these interventions into the ambulance service, notably into frontline clinical staff populations.**

**This is a freedom of information request for the following, please:**

**1. Does the trust/ambulance service utilise therapy dog intervention? If so, why or why not? Is there a specific reason why the trust/ambulance service has or has not utilised a therapy dog.**

SECAMB does not utilise therapy dog interventions. As such, the Trust does not hold information on a specific operational rationale for implementation of therapy dog interventions within SECAMB.

**2. When did your trust/ambulance service first offer these interventions, is it ongoing? If they have ceased, why?**

SECAMB has not offered therapy dog interventions; therefore there is no start date, and it is not ongoing.

**3. If your trust/ambulance service offers therapy dog intervention, what form does it take? Can you provide details on how staff access these interventions.**

Not applicable, as SECAMB does not provide therapy dog interventions.

**4. Who exactly can access a therapy dog? Is it available to frontline staff/staff working in acute care situations? Or staff who are not patient facing? If it's for a specific population of workers and not available to frontline clinical staff, why?**

Not applicable, as SECAMB does not provide therapy dog interventions.

**5. Is there a specific reason why a dog is used? For example, for mental health, to improve staff wellbeing, etc.**

Not applicable, as SECAMB does not use therapy dogs.

**6. If your trust/ambulance service doesn't use a dog, does the trust/ambulance service utilise any other animal intervention?**

SECAMB does not utilise animal-assisted interventions (including therapy animals) as part of its staff wellbeing provision.

**7. Please provide any details of barriers or limitations in the use of therapy dogs.**

SECAMB does not hold recorded information relating to barriers or limitations specific to therapy dog provision, as the Trust does not operate such a service.

**8. Does the trust/ambulance service collect any data surrounding the use of therapy dog intervention? If so, what? Please provide data, if you have it.**

SECAMB does not collect data on therapy dog interventions, as the Trust does not utilise therapy dogs.

**9. If your trust/ambulance service utilise a therapy dog, have you had improvements in staff mental health and wellbeing? Has there been an identifiable trend in staff sickness absence numbers etc.**

Not applicable, as SECAMB does not utilise therapy dogs.

**10. Have staff provided feedback on such intervention? If so, please provide details. Furthermore, how were they recruited for their feedback, was it given voluntarily or requested? Additionally, was there a reasonable amount of feedback provided?**

SECAMB does not hold staff feedback on therapy dog interventions, as the Trust does not provide therapy dog interventions.

**11. Does the trust/ambulance service have any policy, standard operating procedures or guidance on dog therapy or animal assisted interventions in the workplace? If so, please provide this.**

SECAMB does not hold a policy, standard operating procedure, or guidance relating specifically to therapy dogs or animal-assisted interventions in the workplace, as such interventions are not utilised by the Trust.

**12. Who provides therapy dog intervention?**

Not applicable, as SECAMB does not provide therapy dog interventions.

**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**



Saving Lives,  
Serving Our Communities

Chair: Michael Whitehouse CEO: Simon Weldon