NHS
South East Coast
Ambulance Service
NHS Foundation Trust

Trust Headquarters
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Tel: 0300 123 0999
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8th June 2026
Internal Reference: 260511
Email:

Dear ,

Thank you for your request for information, which we received on **[11/05/2026]**.
We have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
Please ensure you quote the Internal Reference number above in any future correspondence.

Your Request

I am writing on behalf of Homelessness Best Practice CIC and Expert Citizens CIC. Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I am writing to request the following information for your trust:

1. **Hospital Inpatients Identified as Homeless**

1. The total number of patients identified as experiencing homelessness while admitted to hospital during the period 1 January 2025 – 31 December 2025.

2. If possible, please provide a breakdown by month.

3. If homelessness is recorded in your patient record system, please indicate the field name or coding used (e.g., "No Fixed Abode", "Housing Status", “Domestic Abuse” etc).

2. **Duty to Refer Referrals**

1. The total number of Duty to Refer referrals made to local housing authorities for patients identified as homeless during the same period 1 January 2025 – 31 December 2025.

2. If available, please provide a breakdown by month.

3. **Service or Policy Data**

1. Does the trust have a dedicated homelessness liaison nurse, social worker, or specialist team?

2. Are there formal policies or procedures for identifying homelessness on admission and throughout treatment?

3. What training does the trust provide for staff on:

1. Identifying homelessness

2. The Duty to Refer under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017?

4. If available, please provide any written guidance, protocols, or discharge guidance given to staff to support patients experiencing homelessness.

Formal Response

Please find the Trust's response to your request below.

1. Hospital Inpatients Identified as Homeless

Questions 1 to 3 are not applicable to the Trust. As an ambulance service, the Trust does not admit patients as hospital inpatients.

2. Duty to Refer Referrals
As an ambulance service, SECAmb does not have a statutory Duty to Refer to local housing authorities.

However, safeguarding referrals may be made for homeless patients. The number of these reported (August 2025 – December 2025, this data was not captured prior to these dates) and escalated to the local authority Social Care teams is noted below. Additionally, SECAmb staff are encouraged to consider direct referrals for patients who are, or are at risk of becoming, street homeless to StreetLink. These referrals would be completed by the attending clinicians and are not recorded in a manner that allows audit.

Safeguarding referrals for patients recorded as Street Homeless during 2025

Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
17	24	25	34	23

3. Service or Policy Data

Questions 3(1) to 3(4) are not applicable to the Trust in the context requested. The Trust does not hold a dedicated homelessness liaison nurse, social worker, or specialist team specific to inpatient hospital care. The Trust is not aware of any specific formal policies or procedures for identifying homelessness on admission and throughout treatment, as the Trust does not provide inpatient hospital services. Where concerns are identified, homelessness may be considered through existing safeguarding processes.

The Trust does not hold separate written guidance, protocols, discharge guidance, or homelessness-specific training materials in the format requested. Any relevant support for patients would ordinarily be considered through wider safeguarding arrangements.

Next steps

Some information held by the Trust is routinely published on our website and may be of assistance.

If you are dissatisfied with the Trust's response to your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review.

Requests for an internal review should be submitted within **40 working days** of the date of this response and should be sent to:

Richard Banks, Head of Corporate Governance at **FOI@secamb.nhs.uk**

The internal review will be conducted by an individual who was not directly involved in handling your original request, ordinarily the Trust's Data Protection Officer. We aim to complete internal reviews within **20 working days** of receipt.

If you remain dissatisfied following the outcome of the internal review, you may complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). The ICO generally expects complaints to be raised promptly following the completion of an internal review.

The easiest way to raise a complaint is via the ICO's website:
www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints

Alternatively, you may write to:
Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane

Wilmslow
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,

Corporate Governance Team
South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust