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24th July 2026
Internal Reference: 260706
Email:

Dear ,

Thank you for your request for information, which we received on **02/07/2026**.
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

Freedom of information request regarding carriage of patients' mobility aids in emergency and patient transport ambulances.

Please confirm whether you have any of the following documents. Where you confirm that you have a document, please supply a copy with your response:

1. Any current policies relating to carrying patients' mobility aids, including but not limited to wheelchairs, assistance dogs, canes, crutches, sticks and rollators, in:
 - a. Emergency ambulances
 - b. Patient transport ambulances
2. Any current operational procedures relating to carrying patients' mobility aids, including but not limited to wheelchairs, assistance dogs, canes, crutches, sticks and rollators, in:
 - a. Emergency ambulances
 - b. Patient transport ambulances
3. Any other current documentation, for example Equality Impact Assessments, relating to carrying patients' mobility aids, including but not limited to wheelchairs, assistance dogs, canes, crutches, sticks and rollators, in:



- a. Emergency ambulances
 - b. Patient transport ambulances
4. If you do not have any of the above documents, please describe in writing what your organisational position is relating to carrying patients' mobility aids, including but not limited to wheelchairs, assistance dogs, canes, crutches, sticks and rollators, in:
- a. Emergency ambulances
 - b. Patient transport ambulances
5. Please confirm whether the policies and documents above apply to parents/carers and other assistants who use mobility aids and who may need to travel with a patient in an emergency ambulance or patient transport ambulance.
6. If existing policies and documents apply to patients only, and not to essential carers, please share any policies that apply to carers.

Formal Response

The Trust holds the following current documentation relevant to the carriage or conveyance of mobility aids and/or assistance dogs in Trust emergency ambulances.

Some of these policies and procedures are reasonably accessible to you via the [Trust website](#), this information is exempt under section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which applies where information is already accessible to the applicant by other means. Section 21 is an absolute exemption and does not require a public interest test. The Trust has therefore listed the relevant document titles below, for the documents that are not readily available they will be attached to this response:

1. Conveyance of Patients with Assistance Dogs Procedure

This procedure applies to the conveyance of assistance dogs with patients aboard Trust emergency ambulances. It confirms that the conveyance of assistance dogs, where required, is considered a reasonable adjustment in accordance with applicable legislation. The procedure sets out guidance for frontline staff on assessing whether it is safe and appropriate to transport an assistance dog, including the use of dynamic risk assessment, safe restraint using a harness or seatbelt strap, infection prevention and control considerations, and escalation routes where an assistance dog cannot be transported or access is refused at the receiving destination.

2. Driver Standards Policy, Procedure and Emergency Driving and the Law

This document includes general requirements for vehicle interior and passenger safety. It states that all equipment that could act as a projectile in the event of a collision must be adequately secured or stored within the vehicle. It also confirms that the driver of the vehicle has ultimate responsibility for the safety of all passengers, and that appropriate means of securing staff, patients and escorts should be provided, so far as is reasonably practicable, on all Trust vehicles.





3. **Clinical Handover and Transfer of Care Procedure**

This procedure includes general guidance that patient property or belongings must be properly secured at all times during conveyance.

4. **Bariatric Patient Treatment Policy and Procedure**

This document is relevant where a patient's size, weight, mobility and/or environment creates additional moving and handling considerations. It includes guidance on dynamic risk assessment, use of appropriate equipment, and specialist bariatric vehicles and equipment where required. It also refers to specialist equipment including a bariatric wheelchair and wheelchair clamps.

5. **Virtual Ambulance and Interactive Standard Load List**

This resource includes information about equipment available on Trust emergency ambulances, including equipment manuals and the standard load list which is enclosed within the response.

The Trust does not hold a single overarching policy specifically covering all categories of mobility aids listed in your request, namely wheelchairs, canes, crutches, sticks and rollators, across all emergency ambulance circumstances. In practice, the Trust's position is that crews must assess each situation individually, taking account of the patient's clinical needs, the type and size of the mobility aid, available vehicle space, safe restraint and storage requirements, infection prevention and control considerations, and any risks to the patient, staff, carers, other passengers or the assistance dog where relevant. Mobility aids or belongings that are conveyed must be safely secured or stored so that they do not create a risk during transport.

In relation to **emergency ambulances**, the Trust's current documented position is therefore contained across the documents listed above rather than in a single standalone policy for all mobility aids. The Trust would consider carriage of mobility aids on a case-by-case basis, subject to operational, clinical and safety considerations. The Trust may be able to convey some mobility aids or associated equipment where it is safe and practicable to do so, but it cannot guarantee carriage of all items in every circumstance, particularly where size, weight, available space or safe securing requirements create a risk.

In relation to **Patient Transport Services**, the Trust does not currently provide the Patient Transport Service contract and does not operate a Patient Transport Services (PTS) vehicle fleet. The Trust is therefore unable to provide current Trust PTS policies or procedures relating to the carriage of mobility aids in patient transport ambulances.

Regarding Equality Impact Assessments or other equality-related documentation, the Trust can confirm that the Conveyance of Patients with Assistance Dogs Procedure includes an approved Equality Analysis Record. The Trust has not identified a separate current Equality Impact Assessment specifically covering the carriage of all





patient mobility aids listed in your request in emergency ambulances or Patient Transport Services.

In respect of parents, carers or other assistants who use mobility aids and who may need to travel with a patient, the Trust's general vehicle safety documentation refers to the safe securing of staff, patients and escorts, where appropriate and so far as reasonably practicable. The Trust does not have a separate current policy specifically for mobility aids used by parents, carers or other assistants travelling with a patient. Any such situation would be assessed on a case-by-case basis, taking account of the patient's clinical needs, whether the person's presence is necessary, the safety of all passengers, available space, and the ability to safely secure or store any mobility aid during the journey.

For ease of reference, copies of the documents held and relevant to your request are provided with this response where available and appropriate.

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



Saving Lives,
Serving Our Communities

Chair: Colin Dennis, Interim CEO: Jen Allan