



Trust Headquarters
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Tel: 0300 123 0999
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5th August 2026
Internal Reference: 260731
Email:

Dear ,

Thank you for your request for information, which we received on **10/07/2026**.
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

I would like to request the follow information:

In the last ten years at your trust:

How many cases of unauthorised access to patient data have occurred? (Figures recorded annually)

Of the total number of cases per year, what root causes were identified and how many cases were there of each of the main cause?

Of these cases what action was taken? eg retraining, improved controls, disciplinary hearing?

How many members of staff have been found to access patient healthcare without authorisation on more than one occasion (these figures can be over either the last five or ten years)?

If there is only information from specific settings such as hospitals or GP surgeries, please can this be labelled.

Formal Response



As a front-line emergency service, our adherence to confidentiality remains at the forefront of our organisation.

All staff complete mandatory IG training on an annual basis and are fully aware that all access to patient information must have a legal basis in line with role and responsibility. The Trust holds a suite of policies relating to information governance and data protection including a Confidentiality Code of Conduct policy. This policy states that any attempt to access personal data without a legal basis constitutes a breach of confidentiality which may result in disciplinary action, including where appropriate dismissal for gross misconduct.

The Trust does not hold the requested information in a centrally reportable format that would allow us to provide figures over the last ten years, broken down annually by number of cases, root cause, action taken, and repeat unauthorised access.

To answer the request as framed, the Trust would be required to manually review individual incident, information governance, employee relations, investigation and disciplinary records across the specified period. This would be necessary to identify whether each case related specifically to unauthorised access to patient data, the root cause recorded, the action taken, and whether any member of staff had been found to have accessed patient healthcare information without authorisation on more than one occasion. This would require a case-by-case review and cross-checking of records held by different teams and systems.

Under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Trust is not obliged to comply with a request where it estimates that the cost of doing so would exceed the appropriate limit. The appropriate limit for NHS organisations is £450, which equates to 18 hours of staff time. The Trust estimates that locating, retrieving, reviewing and extracting the information requested would exceed this limit. We are therefore refusing your request under Section 12 of the Act.

In accordance with Section 16 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Trust has a duty to provide advice and assistance. You may wish to refine your request by narrowing the scope, for example by limiting it to a shorter timeframe, requesting data for a single financial year, or asking for information that is already held in a more readily reportable format.

If you submit a refined request, the Trust will consider it in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

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

