South East Coast Ambulance Service
NHS Foundation Trust

Trust Headquarters
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West Sussex
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Tel: 0300 123 0999
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8th August 2026
Internal Reference: 260801
Email:

Dear ,

Thank you for your request for information, which we received on **01/08/2026**.
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 and our Formal Response

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I am undertaking a dissertation as part of a BSc (Hons) Paramedic Science programme investigating the role of hydrocortisone in UK pre-hospital practice. I would be be grateful if you could provide the following information for the most recent complete calendar year (1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025). If this period is unavailable, please provide the most recent complete 12-month period available.

Please provide:

1. The total number of 999 incidents coded as breathing problems (or the equivalent AMPDS/triage code used by your Trust).

2. The number of patients with a recorded primary clinical impression of asthma.

3. The number of patients with a recorded primary clinical impression of COPD exacerbation.

4. The number of patients who were administered hydrocortisone in the pre-hospital setting.

5. The number of breathing-problem incidents that resulted in conveyance to hospital.

6. If recorded, the number of patients who received hydrocortisone where the primary clinical impression was not asthma or COPD.

For questions 1 to 6 please refer to the table below:

Year	Count of Breathing Difficulty 999 Incidents	Count of Asthma Patients	Count of COPD Patients	Count of Patients who recieved Hydrocortison	Count of Patients who recieved Hydrocortison without signs of Asthma or COPD	Count of Patients with Breathing Difficulties who were conveyed to Hospital
2025	71355	1322	2858	1795	651	30138

Date Range:01/01/2025 - 31/12/2025

Count of BreathingDifficulty 999 Incidents – The total Count of Incidents where the ConditionID was 1110 – *Breathing Problems* or 1203 – *Asthma (Life Threatening)*

Count of Asthma Patients – A subset of **Count of BreathingDifficulty 999 Incidents** where CrewConditionCode1 or CrewConditionCode2 = *B02 – ACUTE ASTHMA*

Count of COPD Patients – A subset of **Count of BreathingDifficulty 999 Incidents** where CrewConditionCode1 or CrewConditionCode2 = *B25 – COPD EXACERBATION*

Count of Patients who received Hydrocortisone – The count of patients who had Hydrocortison administered.

Count of Patients who recieved Hydrocortisone without signs of Asthma or COPD – The count of patients who had Hydrocortisone administered without *B02 – ACUTE ASTHMA or B25 – COPD EXACERBATION* recorded under CrewConditionCode1 or CrewConditionCode2

Count of Patients with Breathing Difficulties who were conveyed to Hospital – A subset of **Count of BreathingDifficulty 999 Incidents** with 'SC' (See and covey) Outcome

7. A copy of, or link to, your current clinical guideline, Patient Group Direction (PGD), Patient Specific Direction (PSD), or other policy governing the administration of hydrocortisone by frontline ambulance clinicians.

SECAmb follow JRCalc guidance for the administration of hydrocortisone, clinical practice guidelines also exist for the management of adrenal crisis with

hydrocortisone with the JRCalc guidance. Schedule 19 exemption permits the emergency administration of parenteral hydrocortisone by paramedics without prescription or specific direction within The Human Medicines Regulations 2012 which the Trust adheres to.

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