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East Sussex  
BN7 2XW

Tel: 0300 123 0999  
Email: [foi@secamb.nhs.uk](mailto:foi@secamb.nhs.uk)

13th February 2015

Email:

Dear

I am writing in response to your enquiry under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) reference FOI/15/01/24.

You requested the following information:

**I would like to know how many times an ambulance had to wait for more than half an hour outside a hospital, with a patient on board, because the hospital had run out of space.**

**I would like this information as a monthly breakdown for 2013 and 2014.**

I'm sorry but I am unable to provide all of the information you are requesting as South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SECAMB) does not hold complete data sets for the period requested for 'handover' times which record the time the ambulance arrives at hospital to the time the ambulance staff hand over the patient to A & E staff.

We only hold robust data on handover times from April 2013 when financial penalties were introduced for hospitals breaching the 30 minutes and 60 minute handover times. Prior to this we only monitored ambulance turnaround times (arrival to clear for next job).

I would like to stress that the NHS as a whole was extremely busy over the winter months and we have been working closely with our colleagues in the acute sector to ensure patients are handed over as swiftly as possible.

However to assist with your enquiry please see attached our spreadsheets showing the number of patients transported to each hospital in our region for the period from April 2013 to December 2013 month by month and January to December 2014 month by month. The document shows the number of patient handovers, the total number of recorded patient handovers and the number of patients waiting longer than 30 minutes. I would like to make it clear that ambulances do not wait outside the hospital with patients on board; the crews will take patients into the hospital for an official handover. I have to make you aware that this data is unvalidated and has not been agreed with the hospitals.

I hope you find this information helpful.

If, for whatever reason you are unhappy with our response, you are entitled to pursue any dissatisfaction through South East Coast Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust's (SECAMB) Internal Review Procedure at:

South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust  
40-42 Friars Walk  
Lewes  
East Sussex  
BN7 2XW  
Email: [complaints@secamb.nhs.uk](mailto:complaints@secamb.nhs.uk)

Should you remain unhappy with the outcome of any such internal review, you may request a decision from the Information Commissioner at:

The Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

If I can be of further assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me, quoting the above reference number.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Coordinator  
South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust