



40-42 Friars Walk
Lewes
East Sussex
BN7 2XW

Tel: 0300 123 0999
Email: foi@secamb.nhs.uk

9th March 2015

Email

Dear

I am writing in response to your enquiry under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) reference FOI/15/02/22.

You requested the following information:

I am writing to make a request under the Freedom of Information Act for details of black breaches (or similarly termed).

More specifically:

1. For the full month of January 2015:

a) For each hospital A&E or Emergency Department you serve, the total number of 'black breaches', where handovers from ambulance arrival to the patient being offloaded to A&E or ED take longer than 60 minutes, during the period.

Please see the attached spreadsheet.

b) Please break down the information for each hospital A&E or ED to show the number of 'black breaches' (plus 60 minute offloading incidents) in each calendar month, eg. Hospital A - January, February, etc., Hospital B - January, February, etc., and so on.

Please see the attached spreadsheet.

c) For each hospital A&E or Emergency Department, please provide the longest recorded handover time from ambulance to A&E or ED for every month. For each of these incidents (the longest handovers in each month), please also provide the recorded summary of the handover in each case, including summary information on the medical reason for the ambulance call out, and any given reason/explanation for the delay.

I regret to advise that we cannot provide any further information as requested on the grounds of the exemption contained within s.12 of the FOIA. To retrieve the information would necessitate manually scrutinizing each handover report for each hospital as shown on the attached spreadsheet

for each month. This would exceed the appropriate limit of 18 hours as set down in the guidance on the application of the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees).

2. a) b) c) The same information for the full 12 months of calendar year 2014.

3. a) b) c) The same information for the full 12 months of calendar year 2013.

PLEASE NOTE: I am only concerned with the handover FROM ambulance to A&E or ED, which is the time from ambulance arrival to the patient being offloaded. I am not seeking any post-handover data (ie. time after offloading for the ambulance to be ready to answer new calls).

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 the main hospitals in our region for the period from April 2013 to December 2013 month by month, from January to December 2014 month by month and the month of January 2015. The document shows the number of patient handovers, the total number of recorded patient handovers and the number of patients waiting longer than 60 minutes.

Please note that the variation in the total number of handovers and the recorded number of handovers is due to the fact that while some admissions may not be recorded by both services, which is required for it to be logged as a recorded handover, some hospital admissions don't require attendance in A&E and patients may be taken directly to other wards or units at the hospital.

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

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