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22nd July 2015

Email:

Dear

I am writing in response to your enquiry under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) reference FOI/15/07/01.

You requested the following information:

I would like to be provided with data on how your trust designated 999 calls.

For each of the years 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 to date, please can you provide me with:

- 1) The total number of 999 calls designated Red 1, Red 2, Green 1, Green 2, Green 3, Green 4.**
- 2) For each of those designations, the total number of calls which received a response (telephone or ambulance) within the required time.**

South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SECamb) has a national target to respond to 75% of 'Red' (life-threatening) category incidents within 8 minutes. If the first response is not a resource able to transport and a transport is required, then one able to should arrive within 19 minutes of it being requested. 'Green' (non-life threatening) category incidents comprise those conditions which need to be attended quickly, but which will not deteriorate or suffer by a slightly slower response. These also include non- life threatening conditions which are generally assistance calls in which someone needs help - perhaps to get up following a fall where no injury has been sustained - or where a minor or non- clinical issue is the prime cause for the call. SECamb uses NHSPathways as its triage software which does not generate any G1 activity; G3 activity is recorded as Hear and Treat, and as such does not require a response. There are two local response targets for Green 2 & 4 responses: G2 – with a target of 30minutes and G4 with a target of 60 minutes.

Please note that we do not have differential response time targets for the various geographical areas in SECamb; our response times will be affected by the geography and frequency of Red category incidents.

Variations on response times exist throughout the year for a number of reasons and this includes time of the year and how busy we are. Bank Holiday weekends are always extremely busy for the ambulance service and our staff work very hard to ensure they reach patients as quickly as possible.

While response times are important, what is also vital is the treatment patients receive once our clinicians arrive at the scene of an emergency. We are pleased that the government now places a greater emphasis on patient outcomes as well as response times. This is something we had been calling for, for a number of years.

Along with all parts of the NHS, SECamb has been and continues to be extremely busy. We recognise that there can be variation in our performance in terms of response times throughout the year. While every effort is made to meet our performance targets at all times, variation can exist because of challenging weather conditions or unanticipated increases in demand.

SECamb staff work extremely hard to meet this increase in demand and the Trust is committed to providing an excellent service to our patients across Kent, Surrey and Sussex.

I would like to stress that we continually look at ways to ensure that we meet our performance standards even at a local level and will look into cases which have longer than average response times to establish whether more can be done to get to patients quicker.

For the statistics on Red 1 and Red 2 response performance, as well as the patient outcome indicators please click on the following link:

<http://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/ambulance-quality-indicators/>

and then click on the 'Download Amb CQI. Dashboard' under the Dashboard heading.

The 999 G2 and G4 response times are based on local targets agreed with commissioners. Please see the attached spreadsheet which shows the number of G2 and G4 999 responses and the number of late G2 and G4 responses. It also shows the G2 and G4, 30 and 60 minute performance respectively together with average response times for G2 and G4 responses.

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