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10th December 2015

Email:

Dear

I am writing in response to your enquiry under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) reference FOI/15/11/39.

You requested the following information:

**Please provide data reports around A & E handover delays and other factors that affect SECamb in Medway.**

South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Trust (SECamb) has worked closely with colleagues from Medway Hospital, CCG and other health and social care partners over the last 18 months on the issue of handover delays. As you can see from the attached graph this close working and actions within the hospital have resulted in a significant reduction in the number of ambulance hours lost each month as a result of delays in handing patients over from the ambulance crew to A&E department. Nationally an assumption is made that this should, on average, take no more than 30 minutes so hours lost each month are counted over and above the allocated 30 minutes.

We would expect to see seasonal fluctuation in the hours lost due to differing seasonal demands on the hospital and do expect some complex patients to require additional time either for clinical reasons or because staff require additional time to prepare the vehicle or be debriefed and supported following complex cases. We do however continue to work closely to minimise the numbers of hours lost in this way as it does reduce capacity to respond to 999 calls in the area.

More widely SECamb works closely with partners in Medway to manage the number of patients taken to hospital following a 999 call. From April to October SECamb managed 11% of patients in Medway who called 999 through telephone advice or onwards referral with no need to send an ambulance response. This is undertaken using the nationally accredited NHS Pathways triage tool and having a number of nurses and paramedics who provide telephone advice to patients. A further 34% of patients received an ambulance response but were managed on scene with treatment and/or advice and did not require transport to hospital. This in part is due to a close working relationship with colleagues at Medway Community Health who accept in the region of 400 referrals a month from SECamb staff to manage patients' needs in the community. This work has resulted in

683 patients less than would have been expected this year being taken to hospital, 59 less than last year the remainder being accounted for by the year on year activity increase.

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