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23rd March 2016

Email:

Dear

I am writing in response to your enquiry under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) reference FOI/16/02/33.

You requested the following information:

I am looking to find the answers to the following questions in relations to the Trusts use and deployment of specialist bariatric vehicles:

1. How or what criteria do SECamb use to define a bariatric patient?

A Bariatric Patient is defined within the Ambulance Sector as someone whose weight or build dictates specialist resources and/or additional systems of work are required for their safe care.

2. How many vehicles does the Trust use, lease or own which are specifically designed or adapted to carry bariatric patients?

If possible can these be broken down into ambulances for emergency use eg 999 or HCP Urgents and ambulances for PTS use and other eg car?

We have three Specialist Ambulance (Bariatric) vehicles in service based at Ashford, Chertsey and Worthing. We also have four Patient Transport Services (PTS) vehicles which have been converted to be able to carry bariatric wheelchairs and have bariatric stretchers. The Bariatric stretchers are our standard stretchers with modifications to allow patients who are wider to be transported. The base model of stretcher can lift a bariatric patient provided they are able to fit on a standard stretcher. Also the vehicle adaptation is such that the stretcher can be located in a more central position – again accommodating a wider patient.

While we have invested in some provision for bariatric patients, the standard equipment on our main fleet of vehicles is able support the needs of patients with a wide variety of complex needs including those related to obesity. The Trust's standard stretcher trolley has a weight capacity of 50st and all the Trust evacuation stair chairs have the capacity to support larger patients up to a weight of 35st

ensuring the majority of patients can still be treated and transported in our standard ambulance vehicles.

3. How many times have these vehicles been used in the calendar years of 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015?

The information in the table below is based on call sign data. However, it should not be assumed that these responses were all dedicated bariatric cases, as the vehicles could also be used for routine emergency responses. We do not hold any information for 2011.

Calendar year	Number of responses based on bariatric call sign data
2012	371
2013	618
2014	507
2015	501

4. How much did these vehicles cost to purchase outright and how much did these vehicles cost annually to run in 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015?

The cost to purchase the three emergency bariatric vehicles was £367,000.

The PTS vehicles are under operating leases and the costs of those leases are included in the annual running costs since 2013, hence the step up in running costs in 2013.

Please see the table below which shows the running costs for these vehicles:

Calendar Year	Cost to run bariatric vehicles
2012	£17,000
2013	£119,000
2014	£104,000
2015	£101,000

6. Do you have a cost figure for these vehicles per incident?

We do not hold this information.

7. Has there been any incidents where the lack of services or suitable equipment/ vehicles has led directly to a clinical event where the patient has been adversely affected? If so, how many in each year for 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015?

Please see the table below which shows the number of incidents relating to bariatric equipment for the calendar years 2011,2012,2013,2014 and 2015.

Calendar year	Incidents relating to bariatric equipment
2011	0
2012	0
2013	0
2014	3
2015	0

We do not record incidents under a specific category titled 'bariatric' therefore we have searched the free text description as completed by our staff when reporting the incident.

8. How many staff are trained to use these vehicles and how many were trained in 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015?

The number of staff who had bariatric training each year is as follows:

2011: 0
2012: 202
2013: 0
2014: 46
2015: 15

9. How much was spent on training staff across this period?

The training was delivered by our own trainers at internal venues.

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