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9th March 2017

Email:

Dear

I am writing in response to your enquiry under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) reference FOI/17/01/33.

You requested the following information:

1.I wish to know how much money the Ambulance service has spent on taxis to take patients to hospital, divided by financial year, for the last five years (2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16).

South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust uses taxis for non-emergency patient transport services journeys to hospitals and clinics.

Please see the table below which shows the expenditure on taxis for Patient Transport Services (PTS) for the requested years.

| Financial Year | Expenditure on taxis for PTS |
|----------------|------------------------------|
| 2011/2012 | 0 |
| 2012/2013 | £143k |
| 2013/2014 | £284k |
| 2014/2015 | £211k |
| 2015/2016 | £396k |

Taxis are not used for responding to 999 calls. However, we do make use of approved taxi companies to convey patients at times of peak demand where there is no medical need for an assessment at scene or ongoing clinical care when a patient is being transported to hospital.

These patients would have received a triage by a trained call handler and if the outcome of this assessment is for the patient to make their own way to a health care facility and for some reason they can't carry out that instruction but are able to travel in a car, the call would be referred to a Clinical Supervisor for assessment. The ambulance service has a duty of care to ensure patients are able to receive care even if there are social barriers to them getting help. The Clinical Supervisor would discuss with the patient what options are available to get to hospital and as a last resort a taxi would be booked if suitable to avoid an ambulance being used as a purpose of transport only.

Please see the table below which shows the expenditure on taxis for A & E patients for the requested years.

| Financial Year | Expenditure on taxis for A & E |
|----------------|--------------------------------|
| 2011/2012 | 0 |
| 2012/2013 | 0 |
| 2013/2014 | 0 |
| 2014/2015 | £2k |
| 2015/2016 | £1k |

2.How much money has the Ambulance service spent on taxis to take patients home from hospital, divided by financial year, for the last five years (2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16).

Please see the tables above.

3.How many patients has the Ambulance service paid for taxis to transport to hospital, divided by financial year, for the last five years (2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16).

As discussed on Wednesday 8th March, please contact us should you still require these figures.

4.How many patients has the Ambulance service paid for taxis to transport home from hospital, divided by financial year, for the last five years (2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16).

As discussed on Wednesday 8th March, please contact us should you still require these figures.

I hope you find this information useful.

If for any reason you are dissatisfied with our response, kindly in the first instance contact Caroline Smart, Information Governance Manager via the following email address:

FOI@secamb.nhs.uk

Yours sincerely

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