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27th February 2017

Email:

Dear

I am writing in response to your enquiry under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) reference FOI/17/01/55.

You requested the following information:

I'm currently a second year paramedic student at the University of Brighton and I have developed a keen interest in the provision of mental health training given to ambulance staff. This has been due to personal and professional experiences and I am carrying out some research into the range of teaching that is given to staff. I am hoping to use the results as part of my dissertation.

I would be very grateful if you could provide me with some information on what training your service provides.

1. What is the content of the initial mental health training you provide your staff with? For example; classroom led course, teaching from a mental health professional, experience shadowing mental health staff

Our Emergency Care Support Workers (ECSWs) within their initial training receive 4 hours 'Mental Health First Aid' module, delivered by mental health first aid trained Paramedics.

SECamb currently have two days compulsory training every year (Key Skills) which must include statutory updates on child and adult safeguarding, and last year included the PREVENT program, and also sessions on acute behavioural disturbance (ABD). This year during key skills the Trust plans to provide clinical staff face to face education and refresher training on the Mental Capacity Act and the mental health act.

Currently all clinical members of staff up to the level Paramedic receive the Trusts' 'Urgent Care Handbook' which contains, for example, a suicide risk matrix to support staff in their decision making of patients' in mental health crisis.

Given the number of education providers nationally we cannot comment on the training of staff who did their initial training outside the Trust, for instance, Paramedics who studied a Paramedic Science (BSc) degree delivered by a Higher Education Institution (HEI).

2. Do staff at all levels receive the same initial mental health training?

There are several grades of clinical staff within the Trust, many have done their initial training and education at varying education providers, and therefore their skill, knowledge and experience will be varied.

The Trusts' Specialist Paramedics (Urgent and Emergency Care) have received additional post-registration education in mental health. This is a university delivered 15 credit module, and includes a 2-week placement within a mental health setting, for example, acute psychiatric ward or community mental health. These Specialist Paramedics can be available for advice and clinical leadership for members of staff in their assessment, and treatment of patients' with mental health disorders.

All members of staff must attend and complete their annual Key Skills training.

3. What is the length of the initial mental health training you provide your staff with? i.e. number of hours or days

Aside from ECSWs, no members of staff receive their initial mental health education by the Trust.

4. What ongoing mental health training do you provide the staff who are employed with you with?

Some elements of mental health may be delivered within the Key Skills education package; the content of the education changes each year. We have also recently recruited a mental health nurse consultant who will be delivering more in-depth mental health training and support for staff in the future.

5. Are you able to provide me with any statistics on the range of jobs that crews attend? For example; mental health related, social, trauma

We are unable to answer this question at present due to the complexity of the incidents we attend, however, it is part of our 2017/8 audit plan to find out in more detail about this.

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