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27th April 2017

Email:

Dear

I am writing in response to your enquiry under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) reference FOI/17/04/04.

You requested the following information:

**1. Do you have a specialist mental health paramedic role in part or all of you trust, or do you have access to specialist mental health professional who can visit patients in their own home 24 hours a day?**

We do not have a specialist mental health (MH) paramedic role, but our Paramedic Practitioners have had specialised training in MH. This is a 15 credit MH course which includes a 2 week mental health placement in a MH services environment. *(We don't offer this course anymore)*

We also have a Mental Health Nurse Consultant who heads mental health strategy for the Trust, in addition to a Mental Health Education Lead.

**2. What training do your staff receive to help them deal with patients suffering from mental health problems?**

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 2 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).

**3. Do any of your staff have the ability to directly refer patients to secondary mental health services, such as: community mental health teams, community drug and alcohol teams, community services for learning disabilities, community eating disorder services**

Yes, if the services are Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) commissioned and/or approved.

**4. Does your trust have any cooperative schemes along side police or other services to help deal with mental health patients?**

We work closely with the police on s136 issues and policies and work to the Crisis Care Concordat with local CCGs. Some of our street triage schemes also work with the police in an unmarked car.

**5. Do your staff have direct access to primary mental health services other than emergency departments?**

Please see the response to Question 3.

**6. If your staff do have access to primary mental health services outside of emergency departments is this available in all areas of your trust?**

We have many different pathways across the whole of SECAmb, some of which are trials, some of which are permanent. In particular, we have several 'street triage' or MH partnership schemes in our control rooms whereby a MH professional (nurse) can access MH care plans and thus make more appropriate decisions regarding care. They also go out to the patient to assess and provide further care as needed.

**7. Have you received any funding for paramedic training since 2000?**

The Trust receives funding annually from Health Education England – Kent, Surrey and Sussex (HEEKSS) to provide In-service staff with BSc and specialist paramedic courses. Mental health is an element covered within these courses. Additionally, all clinical SECAmb staff will be receiving mental health modules as part of the annual statutory and mandatory training.

**8. Did any of this funding go towards the student paramedics' wages?**

The universities are paid by HEEKSS for courses accessed by SECAMB staff as well as providing salary support to pay for travel and expenses incurred. Staff continue to receive wages whilst attending their chosen university courses

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](mailto:FOI@secamb.nhs.uk)

Yours sincerely

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

