



South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS
Foundation Trust
Nexus House
Gatwick Road
Crawley
RH10 9BG

Date 14th September 2017

Email:foi@secamb.nhs.uk

Dear,

I am writing in response to your enquiry under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) reference FOI/17/08/42.

You requested the following information, please also see our response below:

I am part of a team of local clinicians who have set up a register with an Ambulance Service of steroid dependent patients in a particular area (e.g. those with Addison's disease). Under this system, when a call handler receives a call from a registered patient's address they receive an alert stating the patient is steroid dependent and may require urgent treatment with parenteral (IM or IV) steroids.

It is estimated that 8% of patients with steroid dependence have a life-threatening crisis every year. The aim of our initiative is to promote lifesaving hydrocortisone treatment pre hospital for this vulnerable patient group.

We are interested to find out if any other ambulance services nationally have a similar register or alert system in place and would be grateful for your assistance in this enquiry.

South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SECamb) has a process for creating a document called a "Patient Specific Instruction" (PSI), which contains information about a patient's condition or medical regime. PSIs are designed to support ambulance clinicians to provide safe and appropriate care for patients who require treatment that falls outside a paramedic's normal scope-of-practice. PSI applications are received from healthcare professionals, such as a GP or hospital consultant, and on receipt are reviewed by senior clinicians within the Trust before being signed off by either a consultant paramedic or the Trust's Medical Director. A paper copy of the PSI document is then sent to the patient so they can show it to any ambulance clinicians that may be called out to them. An electronic copy of the patient's PSI is stored on the Trust's Intelligence Based Information System (IBIS) and an associated CAD marker added to the patient's address.

Until recently SECamb has included patients with Adrenal Insufficiency/Addison's Disease within the PSI process as, although treatment *does* fall within a paramedic's normal scope of practice, it is a condition that is seen relatively infrequently.

However, education for clinicians around recognition of Addisonian Crisis has improved greatly over recent years and the administration of hydrocortisone is now standard practice for paramedics.

Therefore, on reviewing SECAMB's PSI process, the Trust has decided that it is no longer necessary to include Adrenal Insufficiency/ Addison's Disease, as our clinicians are now sufficiently well equipped, in terms of knowledge, training and medication, to provide a high standard of care to patients with these conditions.

Healthcare professionals across Kent, Medway, Surrey and Sussex can access SECAMB's IBIS system directly to upload care records for individual patients. These are flagged in the event of a 999 call for that patient for the attending clinicians to access.

I hope you find this information of some assistance.

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