



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

Date 20th 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/17/09/09.

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

I am interested in improving the mental health referral process that ambulance services offer and I am particularly interested in finding out the current procedure your trust offers in regards to mental health care and referral. For example, do you have a specialist team working in the community? Do you offer a multi-agency collaborative approach to mental health care? Do you have a specialist area in EOC for mental health calls?...

As we are an emergency service we do operate a referral process as such. Our response is in effect to a perceived emergency (or 111 call) initially via our call centres, and depending on the assessed response as led by our pathways process an appropriate response is initiated.

We do not have a specialist team working in the community although we have just concluded a street triage pilot within which a paramedic practitioner and a mental health nurse were mobile in an ambulance vehicle and responding to mental health crises. The has yielded positive reviews however the formal review of this is ongoing.

Each geographical area of our service (Kent, Surrey, Sussex) has a mental health concordat (SECAMB has membership) the membership of which is multi-agency. The overarching function of these concordats is to discuss the care of individuals with mental health problems that come into contact with our services. SECAMB are also represented on the National Mental Health Ambulance Group within which national best practice is discussed and disseminated.

To improve our services in this area we have recruited a mental health consultant nurse and a mental health education lead.

We are currently piloting a process in our Coxheath Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) whereby mental health professionals are present to take calls. The first phase of this has been a notable success and we are currently in discussion with our commissioner for this area to extend this further.

Bearing in mind the above, we are now having further discussions about the most appropriate and cost effective method of support i.e. EOC model/community model going forward.

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