



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

Date 18<sup>th</sup> December 2017

Email:

Email:foi@secamb.nhs.uk

Dear,

I am writing in response to your enquiry under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) reference FOI/17/10/21.

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

**This enquiry is in relation to the Transition to Practise course at High Ashurst**

**Under what SECAMb policy or procedure are you able to indicate a mandatory residential course in communal accommodation and in particular Tipi's or alike.**

The course itself is not mandatory.

*Please note at the current time, the overnight stay at High Ashurst has been withdrawn whilst the programme is reviewed.*

**Under what SECAMb policy or procedure would you manage a refusal of a candidate to attend a communal sleeping arrangement.**

This would be managed through the principles of common sense. Although no candidate has ever refused to attend stating this as the reason, there have been occasions where candidates have requested not to attend for other reasons and these requests have always been honoured.

*Please note at the current time, the overnight stay at High Ashurst has been withdrawn whilst the programme is reviewed.*

**What alternative team building exercise would be offered in the event of a refusal or non -compatibility of a candidate for such a course.**

This would be dealt with on an individual basis and we would review what alternative would meet the same outcomes

The nature of a well-designed programme of education is that learning outcomes are covered in multiple ways throughout the course, allowing for candidates to both develop over time and to learn through a variety of methods. The Transition to Practice course is no exception to this.

**What SECAMb health and safety risk assessment has been undertaken for this particular course please can you evidence and disclose this**

A risk assessment has been undertaken both by the Clinical Education Department and by the

external organisation who provide facilitators for this aspect of the course. Both are attached for your reference

**What Equality impact analysis has been undertaken for this course and in particular in reference to communal sleeping arrangements**

The overnight accommodation at High Ashurst has been withdrawn. The EIA will be undertaken prior to the next Transition to Practice course, which is due to take place in March 2018.

*Please note at the current time, the overnight stay at High Ashurst has been withdrawn whilst the programme is reviewed.*

**Which working group was the above information presented to 4 + years ago for approval**

The entire Transition to Practice course is under continuous review by the Clinical Education team through the Clinical Education Sub Group (CESG), formerly the Educational Governance Working Group (EGWG).

**- How many SECAMB managers supervising staff are present with the candidates day and night**

This is variable – there is generally a minimum of one manager on site during the day along with a number of external facilitators. Overnight there are no SECAMB managers on site, however there is always a manager 'on call' to respond to any issues and contact details are provided to all candidates. In addition, there is usually one external facilitator on site overnight.

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**How many hours are paid to the candidates for the entire duration of the course and can this be referenced against the candidates SECAMB and AFC terms and conditions including meal breaks.**

During the Transition to Practice course, as for all training courses, candidates are paid for a 37.5 hour working week (Monday to Friday). Start and finish times can vary depending on the nature of the training.

**Is the report that the communal sleeping arrangements are mixed gender correct or incorrect**

Sleeping arrangements are made by the candidates themselves based on who they would rather share with. Although previously candidates have been instructed to restrict each individual unit to a single gender, this instruction has been removed on the request of candidates who have stated they would rather have the choice over who they share with.

*Please note at the current time, the overnight stay at High Ashurst has been withdrawn whilst the programme is reviewed.*

**Since the professor Lewis report on SECAMB has a complete review of this type of course been undertaken with the appropriate governance**

As previously stated, the course is under continuous review with feedback obtained following each cohort of candidates and changes made based on this, as well as Trust and national guidance.

**Is the physical activity aspect on the course mandatory**

No aspect of the course is mandatory – it is a learning environment, therefore candidates are

encouraged to participate and develop. Where candidates are unwilling to participate the reasons for this are explored. However, candidates can (and do) abstain from any aspect of the course as there is no educational benefit in forcing an individual to undertake activities against their will.

**Are the reports of open distress by candidates due to issues such as fear of heights true and where these documented**

From time to time candidates do have fears or aversions to activities on the course (not limited to a fear of heights), however as for the previous statement candidates are encouraged, but not forced, to participate. Often candidates who have experienced transient distress (e.g. Due to heights) have reported the greatest benefit as they feel they have grown as individuals and have a sense of accomplishment.

**How many physical injuries have been sustained during physical activities and where the candidates advised to complete an IRW1 in line with trust policy.**

There has been 1 reported incident since 2014

**Has there been any non reported incidents?**

We would not hold information if this has not been reported

**How much does it cost per candidate ?**

It costs approximately £162 per candidate.

**How much for each of the last 4 years has been spent on this ?**

582 students have completed the course since 1<sup>st</sup> December 2013 and the combined cost was £94,398.86

**Do the present directors of SECAMB know this course is put on and how it is run with the sleeping arrangements etc?**

The present directors are now aware of the details of this course and support the decision to pause the accommodation aspect

**Is there any documentation to say if there is any conflict of interest or of declaration of interest associated with the company, or their employees, that is used to facilitate the accommodation/course.**

There is no known conflict of interest or declaration of interest with either the facilitators or the venue (which is a Surrey County Council venue).

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

Yours sincerely

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