

Freedom of Information Act Request

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act. This request uses Emergency Care Data Set (ECDS) definitions; it is my understanding that your Trust should hold this data, therefore, as part of your ECDS reporting. I'm mindful this is quite a long request, but I hope that the specificity herein should help ensure the data can be accessed easily, and within cost limits. The purpose of the data collection is for researching the prevalence of ED care episodes which could, potentially, have been assessed and managed in an environment outside of hospital.

In the time period from 1 April 2023 to 30 March 2025:

(a) How many care episodes where patients were brought by emergency road ambulance into the emergency department(s) in your hospital trust were there? (If you are unable to differentiate between emergency and non-emergency ambulance, please indicate that you are not able to, and then include all ambulance attendances in the figure provided.)

(b) Which ambulance trusts brought patients to your emergency department(s) by emergency road ambulance, and how many care episodes were there where patients were brought in by each trust? (If you are unable to differentiate between emergency and non-emergency ambulance, please indicate that you are not able to, and then include all ambulance attendances in the figure provided. If you do not hold per-patient data on which ambulance trust brought a patient to your emergency department(s), please indicate that you are not able to, and provide only the name(s) of the ambulance trust(s) known to bring patients to your emergency department(s).)

(c) Of those care episodes (corresponding to an "Arrival by emergency road ambulance (finding)" Urgent and Emergency Care Arrival Mode, with SCTID 1048031000000100), how many resulted in a discharge from the emergency department with one of the below Urgent and Emergency Care Discharge Destinations, as reportable to ECDS:

Patient discharge, to legal custody (SCTID 50861005)
Discharge to hospital at home service (SCTID 1066351000000102)
Discharge to police custody (SCTID 306705005)
Discharge to nursing home (SCTID 306694006)
Discharge to residential home (SCTID 306691003)
Discharge to home (SCTID 306689006)

AND with, respectively, each of the following, as reportable to ECDS (each subcriterion here is separated with dashes for ease of reading):

(i) Either no Urgent and Emergency Care Clinical Investigations or ONLY one or more of the following:

Glucose measurement, blood, test strip (SCTID 104686004)
Dementia test (SCTID 165320004)

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Clinical investigation not indicated (SCTID 1088291000000101)
Peak expiratory flow measurement (SCTID 29893006)
Electrocardiographic procedure (SCTID 29303009)

AND either no Urgent and Emergency Care Procedures or ONLY one or more of the following:

Patient given written advice (SCTID 413334001)
Psychosocial assessment (SCTID 371585000)
Mobility/transfers education, guidance, and counseling (SCTID 410267000)
Application of dressing, minor (SCTID 15631002)
Application of sling (SCTID 52037006)
Assessment of mobility (SCTID 430481008)
Osteoporosis - falls prevention (SCTID 391027005)
Activities of daily living assessment (SCTID 304492001)
Social assessment (SCTID 406551008)
Treatment not indicated (SCTID 183964008)

(ii) Either no Urgent and Emergency Care Clinical Investigations or ONLY one or more of the following:

Glucose measurement, blood, test strip (SCTID 104686004)
Dementia test (SCTID 165320004)
Clinical investigation not indicated (SCTID 1088291000000101)
Peak expiratory flow measurement (SCTID 29893006)
Electrocardiographic procedure (SCTID 29303009)

AND either no Urgent and Emergency Care Procedures or ONLY one or more of the following:

Patient given written advice (SCTID 413334001)
Psychosocial assessment (SCTID 371585000)
Mobility/transfers education, guidance, and counseling (SCTID 410267000)
Application of dressing, minor (SCTID 15631002)
Application of sling (SCTID 52037006)
Assessment of mobility (SCTID 430481008)
Osteoporosis - falls prevention (SCTID 391027005)
Activities of daily living assessment (SCTID 304492001)
Social assessment (SCTID 406551008)
Treatment not indicated (SCTID 183964008)
Review of medication (SCTID 182836005)
New medication commenced (SCTID 266712008)

(iii) Either no Urgent and Emergency Care Clinical Investigations or ONLY one or more of the following:

Glucose measurement, blood, test strip (SCTID 104686004)

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Dementia test (SCTID 165320004)
Clinical investigation not indicated (SCTID 1088291000000101)
Peak expiratory flow measurement (SCTID 29893006)
Electrocardiographic procedure (SCTID 29303009)
Urinalysis (SCTID 27171005)
D-dimer assay (SCTID 70648006)
Serum lactate measurement (SCTID 270982000)
Ultrasonography (SCTID 16310003)
Echocardiography (SCTID 40701008)
Blood gases, venous measurement (SCTID 61911006)
Measurement of urea and electrolytes (SCTID 252167001)

AND either no Urgent and Emergency Care Procedures or ONLY one or more of the following:

Patient given written advice (SCTID 413334001)
Psychosocial assessment (SCTID 371585000)
Mobility/transfers education, guidance, and counseling (SCTID 410267000)
Application of dressing, minor (SCTID 15631002)
Application of sling (SCTID 52037006)
Assessment of mobility (SCTID 430481008)
Osteoporosis - falls prevention (SCTID 391027005)
Activities of daily living assessment (SCTID 304492001)
Social assessment (SCTID 406551008)
Treatment not indicated (SCTID 183964008)
Review of medication (SCTID 182836005)
New medication commenced (SCTID 266712008)

(iv) Either no Urgent and Emergency Care Clinical Investigations or ONLY one or more of the following:

Glucose measurement, blood, test strip (SCTID 104686004)
Dementia test (SCTID 165320004)
Clinical investigation not indicated (SCTID 1088291000000101)
Peak expiratory flow measurement (SCTID 29893006)
Electrocardiographic procedure (SCTID 29303009)
Urinalysis (SCTID 27171005)
D-dimer assay (SCTID 70648006)
Serum lactate measurement (SCTID 270982000)
Ultrasonography (SCTID 16310003)
Echocardiography (SCTID 40701008)
Blood gases, venous measurement (SCTID 61911006)
Measurement of urea and electrolytes (SCTID 252167001)
Complete blood count (SCTID 26604007)

AND either no Urgent and Emergency Care Procedures or ONLY one or more of the following:

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Patient given written advice (SCTID 413334001)
Psychosocial assessment (SCTID 371585000)
Mobility/transfers education, guidance, and counseling (SCTID 410267000)
Application of dressing, minor (SCTID 15631002)
Application of sling (SCTID 52037006)
Assessment of mobility (SCTID 430481008)
Osteoporosis - falls prevention (SCTID 391027005)
Activities of daily living assessment (SCTID 304492001)
Social assessment (SCTID 406551008)
Treatment not indicated (SCTID 183964008)
Review of medication (SCTID 182836005)
New medication commenced (SCTID 266712008)

In your response, please do not exclude matches from one of these from the others – i.e. if your response to (c)(i) was 100, the response to (c)(ii) should be 100 + the number of patients who had either no investigations or only the listed investigations common to (i) and (ii), and either no procedures or only the procedures from (i) plus Review of medication (SCTID 182836005) or New medication commenced (SCTID 266712008).

(d) For each group from (c)(i) to (c)(iv), please provide the ten most common discharge diagnoses, their SNOMED CT code, and the number of care episodes for each. (If you are unable to provide SNOMED CT codes for any reason, please indicate this and just provide the discharge diagnosis as text. If you are unable to provide this information at all, either because you reach the FoI cost limit or because you do not store this information in a way which is retrievable for the purposes of a data request, please indicate why you were unable to provide the information.)

Response

Thank you for your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 regarding Emergency Department attendances conveyed by emergency road ambulance and subsequent discharge characteristics, using Emergency Care Data Set (ECDS) definitions.

Refusal Notice – Section 12

The Trust is unable to comply with your request in full, as to do so would exceed the appropriate cost limit set out in Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004.

For NHS Trusts, the appropriate limit is £450, equivalent to 18 hours of staff time.

Explanation

While some headline activity data relating to Emergency Department attendances conveyed by ambulance is held by the Trust, the remainder of your request would require extensive bespoke data extraction, validation and clinical interpretation across multiple systems.

In particular, responding to parts **(c)** and **(d)** of your request would require:

- Identification of individual Emergency Department care episodes over a two-year period
- Cross-matching multiple ECDS data fields, including:
 - Arrival mode
 - Discharge destination

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- Clinical investigations
- Procedures
- Discharge diagnoses
- Application of multiple, overlapping inclusion and exclusion criteria across four separate groupings
- Manual clinical and informatics review to ensure correct interpretation of SNOMED CT codes and ECDS reporting rules
- Aggregation and validation of results to ensure accuracy and consistency

This level of analysis is not held in a pre-compiled or reportable format and would require significant manual processing by specialist clinical, informatics and performance staff. The Trust estimates that undertaking this work would substantially exceed the 18-hour cost limit.

The Trust is therefore refusing this request under Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act.

Advice and Assistance

In accordance with Section 16 of the Freedom of Information Act, the Trust is happy to provide advice to help you refine your request so that it may fall within the cost limit.

You may wish to consider:

- Limiting the request to aggregate counts of ambulance-conveyed Emergency Department attendances only (part (a))
- Removing the requirement to cross-match detailed investigation, procedure and diagnosis SNOMED CT codes
- Requesting high-level discharge destination counts only, without further stratification by investigations or procedures

If you would like to submit a revised request along these lines, the Trust would be happy to consider it.

If you are not satisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to request an internal review. Requests for an internal review should be submitted within 40 working days from the date of this response, and should be addressed to d.wraith@nhs.net.

If you remain dissatisfied after the internal review, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). The ICO can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Tel: 0303 123 1113
Website: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/>

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