

FOI REF: 21/023

5<sup>th</sup> February 2021

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Website: [www.esht.nhs.uk](http://www.esht.nhs.uk)

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

I am responding to your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act. The answers to your specific questions are as follows:

**This is a freedom of information request regarding swabs (surgical gauze swabs) that are used in obstetrics (birth packs, suture kits etc) and open surgeries such as laparotomies and incidents where swabs have been accidentally left within a patient.**

- 1. Within the last 3 years, have there been any incidents recorded where a gauze swab was retained in the body cavity of a patient?**

In the last three years there were 6 incidents where a gauze swab was retained in the body cavity of a patient.

- 2a. If yes, was compensation paid to the patient(s)?**

The information requested above is collated by NHS Resolution and is available via their website which can be accessed using the link below:

<https://resolution.nhs.uk/resources/factsheet-5-trust-and-authority-claims-data-2019-20/>

Freedom of Information requests to NHS Resolution can be made via the link below:

<https://resolution.nhs.uk/freedom-of-information/>

Or by writing direct to:

The Information Access Manager  
NHS Resolution  
151 Buckingham Palace Road  
London SW1W 9SZ

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2b. **What was the total value of compensation paid to the patient(s)?**

Please see question 2a.

3. **With regards to purchasing, how many procedure packs and swabs packs were purchased in the last complete financial year?**

As we are sure you will appreciate, the Trust is facing an unprecedented challenge in managing the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Our teams do not therefore have the capacity to respond to this part of your freedom of information request during this extraordinary period and we apologise that we will not be able to respond. If you would still like the information please resubmit your request at the beginning of April.

<b>Product Type</b>	<b>Number of packs purchased*</b>	<b>Additional information re: number of packs per carton</b>
<b>Birth packs (standard delivery packs containing gauze swabs and other supplies)</b>		
<b>Suture packs (e.g. used to repair vaginal tears containing gauze swabs and other supplies)</b>		
<b>Laparotomy packs</b>		
<b>Swab packs (packs of 5 swabs used in surgery to pack open wounds, absorb blood etc).</b>		

4. **Regarding brands and suppliers, which brands of product are being used and who is supplying them?**

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<b>Product Type</b>	<b>Brands used</b>	<b>Supplied by</b>
<b>Birth packs (standard delivery packs containing gauze swabs and other supplies)</b>		
<b>Suture packs (e.g. used to repair vaginal tears containing gauze swabs and other supplies)</b>		
<b>Laparotomy packs</b>		
<b>Swab packs (packs of 5 swabs used in surgery to pack open wounds, absorb blood etc).</b>		

5. **Are any of the following swab safety products purchased for used in surgery? These products are safety products designed to help clinicians count swabs in and out of the body.**

- **SwabSafe™ (Central Medical Supplies)**
- **Surgicount™ (Stryker)**
- **Situate™ (Medtronic)**

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If I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Should you be dissatisfied with the Trust's response to your request, please write to Lynette Wells, Director of Corporate Affairs, East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust ([lynette.wells2@nhs.net](mailto:lynette.wells2@nhs.net)) quoting the above reference.

Yours sincerely

Linda Thornhill (Mrs)  
Corporate Governance Manager  
[esh-tr.foi@nhs.net](mailto:esh-tr.foi@nhs.net)