

FOI REF: 22/423

Tel: 0300 131 4500
Website: www.esht.nhs.uk

5th October

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:

Under the freedom of information act 2000, I am requesting the following information on the NHS discharge medicine service (DMS), which became a nationally commissioned service on 15 February 2021.

1) When did your trust begin referring patients through the NHS DMS?

15th February 2021.

2) How many patients has your trust referred to community pharmacies through the DMS between 15 February 2021 and 14 July 2022?

3,779.

a. How many patients has your trust discharged in total within this timeframe?

Clarification was sought with regard to your definition of the number of patients the Trust has discharged in total asking you to confirm if this is just the Acute setting or Op and Community and confirmation was received as follows:

Question 2a refers to discharges across Acute, Op and Community settings.

148163.

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- 3) **According to national guidance for operating the DMS, trusts are responsible for developing their own eligibility criteria for patients referred through the service that meet “local population needs” (see page 13). Please could you supply a copy of your trust’s eligibility criteria for referring patients through the DMS?**

East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust does not have a policy as requested. However, the following criteria is the guide that is followed by the Trust:

People taking more than five medications, where the risk of harmful effects and drug interactions is increased.

- *Those who have had new medicines prescribed while in hospital.*
- *Those who have had medication change(s) while in hospital.*
- *Those who have experienced myocardial infarction or a stroke due to likelihood of new medicines being prescribed.*
- *Those who appear confused about their medicines on admission/when getting ready for discharge and have already needed additional support from a healthcare professional.*
- *Those who have help at home to take their medications.*
- *Those patients who have a learning disability*

Multiple resources cite a list of ‘high risk medicines’. They include but are not limited to: anticoagulants (e.g. warfarin, dabigatran), antiepileptics, digoxin, opioids, methotrexate, antipsychotics, cardiovascular drugs (e.g. beta-blockers, diuretics), controlled drugs, valproate, amiodarone, lithium, insulin, methotrexate, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) and aspirin among others.

- *Newly started respiratory medication, including inhalers.*
- *Medication requiring follow-up, e.g. blood monitoring, dose titration.*
- *Patients prescribed medicines that have potential to cause dependence (e.g. opioids).*
- *Those for which doses vary/change, either increasing or decreasing over time*

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, you have the right to request an internal review. Please write to the Freedom of Information Department (esh-tr.foi@nhs.net), quoting the above reference, within 40 working days. The Trust is not obliged to accept an internal review after this date.

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Should you still be dissatisfied with your FOI request, you have the right of complaint to the Information Commissioner at the following address:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

Yours sincerely

Linda Thornhill (Mrs)
Corporate Governance Manager
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