

FOI REF: 25/276a

6th June 2025

Tel: 0300 131 4500
Website: 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:

Please note the following regarding the responses below:

- The readings are taken from a continuous formaldehyde meter. This equipment takes snapshot readings from approximately 1000 to 6000 times per day. The readings are, therefore, not specific to any particular event and will show multiple readings from the same time period where a fluctuation in levels occurred.
 - At the Conquest Hospital site, the tissue processors are situated in the same location. This is the main reason for differing readings cross-site. To caveat this, staff are provided with formaldehyde masks while working in this area.
 - The Formaldemeter itself will sound the alarm if the readings breach 2ppm; staff are instructed to leave the area if this occurs. Of the 69 readings in excess of 2ppm, 25 (36%) of these were outside working hours, so no staff would have been present.
1. **In the past 12 months, on how many separate occasions have formaldehyde levels been recorded that are greater than 0.3ppm but less than or equal to 0.4ppm in the Trust's Histopathology Department?**

Conquest Hospital, St Leonards-on Sea: 5,433

Eastbourne District General Hospital: 23

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2. In the past 12 months, on how many separate occasions have formaldehyde levels been recorded that are greater than 0.4ppm but less than or equal to 0.5ppm in the Trust's Histopathology Department?

Conquest Hospital, St Leonards-on Sea: 3,804

Eastbourne District General Hospital: 9

3. In the past 12 months, on how many separate occasions have formaldehyde levels been recorded that are greater than 0.5ppm but less than or equal to 0.6ppm in the Trust's Histopathology Department?

Conquest Hospital, St Leonards-on Sea: 2,179

Eastbourne District General Hospital: 7

4. In the past 12 months, on how many separate occasions have formaldehyde levels been recorded that are greater than 0.6ppm but less than or equal to 0.7ppm in the Trust's Histopathology Department?

Conquest Hospital, St Leonards-on Sea: 1,345

Eastbourne District General Hospital: 3

5. In the past 12 months, on how many separate occasions have formaldehyde levels been recorded that are greater than 0.7ppm but less than or equal to 0.8ppm in the Trust's Histopathology Department?

Conquest Hospital, St Leonards-on Sea: 981

Eastbourne District General Hospital: 2

6. In the past 12 months, on how many separate occasions have formaldehyde levels been recorded that are greater than 0.8ppm but less than or equal to 0.9ppm in the Trust's Histopathology Department?

Conquest Hospital, St Leonards-on Sea: 584

Eastbourne District General Hospital: 2

7. In the past 12 months, on how many separate occasions have formaldehyde levels been recorded that are greater than 0.9ppm but less than or equal to 1ppm in the Trust's Histopathology Department?

Conquest Hospital, St Leonards-on Sea: 464

Eastbourne District General Hospital: 0

8. In the past 12 months, on how many separate occasions have formaldehyde levels been recorded that are greater than 1ppm but less than or equal to 1.5ppm in the Trust's Histopathology Department?

Conquest Hospital, St Leonards-on Sea: 1,189

Eastbourne District General Hospital: 1

9. In the past 12 months, on how many separate occasions have formaldehyde levels been recorded that are greater than 1.5ppm but less than or equal to 2ppm in the Trust's Histopathology Department?

Conquest Hospital, St Leonards-on Sea: 184

Eastbourne District General Hospital: 0

10. In the past 12 months, on how many separate occasions have formaldehyde levels been recorded that exceed 2ppm in the Trust's Histopathology Department?

Conquest Hospital, St Leonards-on Sea: 69

Eastbourne District General Hospital: 0

Further to our response of 6th May 2025, we subsequently received the following request from yourself and our reply is detailed below:

Please clarify what is meant by "formaldehyde mask"?

Please see the link below for details of the formaldehyde mask being used by the Trust:

[Reusable 30-Day FFP3 Formaldehyde Mask – The Mazwell Group](#)

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.

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

Freedom of Information Department
esh-tr.foi@nhs.net