

FOI REF: 26/676

28th October 2026

Eastbourne District General Hospital

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Eastbourne
East Sussex
BN21 2UD

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

Further to your recent request for information made under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000, I now set out our answers to your specific questions, and any clarifications sought and provided, as follows:

- 1) **Please provide a list of every critical or major incident declared by a hospital under the trust's management since 1 January 2016, or for as far back towards that date as data is available.**
 - **For each incident, please provide the date it began, the length of time it remained in place, and the hospital(s) that was subject to the declaration. Please also provide the reason that the incident was declared, should there be one recorded.**

[Please see the attached document - 'FOI 26-676 Response'.](#)

- 2) **Please also provide the trust's current policy for when a critical incident should be declared.**

[In the event of a critical incident being declared, East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust refer to the following national guidance: B0900-NHS-Emergency-Preparedness-Resilience-and-Response-Framework-version-3.pdf.](#)

I trust this information is helpful in its detail or explanation however, if you are dissatisfied with the response, then you have the right to request an internal review. If you wish to seek an internal review, please write to the Freedom of Information Team at esh-tr.foi@nhs.net quoting the above FOI reference number, within 40 working days. Please note the Trust is not obliged to accept a request for an internal review after this time period.

Yours faithfully

Freedom of Information (FOI) Team
East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust
0300 131 4716
Core Hours of Business: Monday to Friday 9.00am to 4.00pm

FOI 26/676 - East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust

Incident Name	Description	Subject	Timeframe	Hospital Effected	Declaration
Birling Gap Gas Cloud	A suspected chemical/gas cloud drifted ashore at Birling Gap and along the East Sussex coastline, causing eye, throat and skin irritation to members of the public. Approximately 150 casualties attended hospital for assessment and treatment	Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN)/Public Health	27 August 2017. The incident occurred during the afternoon and evening and was stood down the same day once the plume had dispersed.	Eastbourne District General Hospital (EDGH)	Major Incident declared in response to the suspected gas cloud affecting the East Sussex coastline.
Covid 19 - Pandemic	National NHS response to the COVID-19 pandemic following the declaration of a Level 4 national incident by NHS England. This required all NHS organisations to activate incident management arrangements and adapt services to manage the pandemic.	Pandemic / Infectious Disease Emergency (COVID-19)	Commenced on 2 March 2020 when NHS England declared a Level 4 National Incident. Response arrangements remained in place throughout the pandemic period.	Eastbourne District General Hospital (EDGH) Conquest Hospital All NHS acute hospitals in England operated under the national response framework	Level 4 National Incident (Major Incident) declared by NHS England on 2 March 2020