



27 January 2016

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Request No: AD-IG-01(2)-2015-128

Key Word: Non-NIAS Resources

Subject: Non-NIAS Resources

Request: **Date Received:** 17/11/2015

Date of Response: 27/01/2016

Thank you for your request for information received on 17 November 2015 and which was dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. We would also inform you that Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) Health and Social Care Trust has now completed its search for the information you requested and which is detailed below and attached for your attention.

I would further apologise for the delay in the provision of the information and for your patience with this.

Question 1

Please provide the number of patients dealt with by non-NIAS vehicle resources, e.g. private ambulances, in 2013/14, 2014/15 and 2015/16 (April to Sept 30 2015)

Answer 1

NIAS has in place contracts with non-NIAS resource providers ie volunteer, private ambulance services, other taxis etc which can undertake emergency and non-emergency activity on behalf of NIAS. This data has been attached as an Excel spreadsheet labelled FOI_128 and has been split between emergency and non-emergency activity. **Please note that a patient may be transported many times over the course of one year and the same patient may have been transported hundreds of times by us ie 1 patient may have been transported 250 times during a year but has been counted as 1 patient as specified in your request. Patients with ongoing medical conditions such as renal patients can be on treatment plans for many years and therefore may be counted in each financial year but it may be the same patient.**

However we have also provided under FOI_128 data which is for journeys undertaken by non-NIAS resources from both an emergency and non-emergency perspective. Please note that a journey is counted as 1 patient being moved from one location to another. For example, 1 patient going for an outpatient appointment will be taken to Hospital and transported back home again. This will be counted as 2 journeys (but it is 1 patient).

For background information, the Non-Emergency Control Centre volunteer car services operate under the auspice of NIAS who maintain a register of the volunteer drivers. The service is provided by member of the public, using their own private vehicles, transport patients to and from Hospital facilities for non-emergency outpatient appointments including renal treatments etc.



Under the Emergency Control Centre, private and volunteer ambulance providers are used to transport patients eg St Johns, Red Cross, Order of St Malta etc

Question 2

Please provide the cost to NIAS of using non-NIAS vehicle resources, e.g. private ambulances, in each of these years.

Answer 2

This data has been detailed below. Reference should also be made to Answer 1 above and the attached datasets. It should be further noted that voluntary car service drivers are not employed by NIAS, however, they do receive a mileage allowance for transporting patients on our behalf. Other taxis consists of journeys booked by other HSC providers to transport patients from their own home to non-emergency outpatients appointments. NIAS utilises Private and Voluntary Ambulance providers when it is estimated that higher levels of activity will be evident such as Christmas/New Year, weekends and one off events, for example The Irish Open. The requirement to engage such services has increased markedly over recent years. The Trust also has arrangements with other Ambulance Services to provide specialist cover and resources for specific events, for example the G8 Summit.

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16 April to Sept
Voluntary Car Service	1,252,790	1,153,405	634,741
Other Taxis	218,394	238,660	46,945
St John	13,416	132,766	86,085
British Red Cross	5,355	53,274	45,464
Scottish Ambulance Service	37,055		
CPNI		9,480	15,075
North West Ambulance Service NHS Trust		8,704	
Order of Malta		4,900	11,044
Proparamedics			53,827
MTS			1,209

I hope the above and attached fully assists you. If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review. You should do this as soon as possible, or in any case within two months of the date of issue of this letter. Please note that, under the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations, if you wish to publish or otherwise use this information besides for your own means, you will need to seek our permission to do so.

In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to the Finance and ICT Director, Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) HSC Trust, Site 30, Knockbracken Healthcare Park, Saintfield Road, Belfast, BT8 8SG. If following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision maker, you remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request, you may make a complaint under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner's Office and ask that they investigate whether the Trust has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act.

You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

Website: ni@ico.org.uk
Post: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, CHESHIRE SK9 5AF
Telephone: 028 9027 8757 or 0303 123 1114 (Belfast based Office)

In most circumstances the Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out. However the Commissioner has the option to investigate the matter at his discretion. Please be advised that NIAS replies under Freedom of Information may be released into the public domain via our website @ <http://www.niamb.co.uk>. Personal details in respect of your request will have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.

Yours sincerely

Alison Vitty

Alison Vitty (Miss)
CORPORATE MANAGER



USE OF NON-NIAS RESOURCES

NUMBER OF PATIENTS TREATED AND/OR TRANSPORTED TO HOSPITAL BY NON-NIAS RESOURCES SERVICE (A&E SYSTEM - EMERGENCY ACTIVITY)

Services used: Red Cross, St. John's Ambulance,
ProParamedics, Order of Malta, CPNI

Year	Patients	Journeys
2013-14	656	656
2014-15	2044	2046
2015-16*	1751	1671

* To end September 2015

**A patient is the same individual

***A journey is from one location to another ie one patient going into an appointment and home again is 2 journeys

A&E

Some patients have been treated or transported to hospital more than once in the same year and continue to be treated into the next year.

Patient count is based on unique names in system - in a minority of records the patient name has not been recorded. Assumption has been made that these are individual patient's
Figures include admissions, transfers and discharges.

NUMBER OF PATIENTS TRANSPORTED TO HOSPITAL BY NON-NIAS RESOURCES SERVICE (PCS SYSTEM - NON EMERGENCY ACTIVITY)

Services used Voluntary Car Service, Other taxis

Year	Patients**	Journeys***
2013-14	1553	91470
2014-15	1233	86408
2015-16*	983	42996

* To end September 2015

**A patient is the same individual

***A journey is from one location to another ie one patient going into an appointment and home again is 2 journeys

PCS

Some patients will have transported many times in the same year. Figures include return journeys. Renal patients on treatment plans may continue treatment over a number of years.

Patient count based on unique names and reference numbers in system - in a minority of records the patient name is not recorded. Assumption has been made that these are individual patient's
Cancelled, suspended and aborted bookings not included.
Figures include admissions, transfers and discharges.

Produced by NIAS Information Department
Knockbracken Healthcare Park, Saintfield Road, Belfast, BT8 8SG.
Tel: 028 9040 0710 - Fax: 028 9040 0908 - Email: statistics@nias.hscni.net