



### FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

**Request No:** AD-IG-01(2)-80-2017  
**Key Word:** Muscular Dystrophy  
**Subject:** Muscular Dystrophy  
**Request:**      **Date Received:** 21/06/2017  
                         **Date of Monitoring:** 22/06/2017  
                         **Date of Response:** 11/07/2017

Thank you for your request for information received on 22 June 2017 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 for your attention.

#### Question 1

What systems or technologies does the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service NHS Trust have in place to alert paramedics and emergency responders that the patient they are about to respond to has a medical condition that needs additional and/or specialist attention?

#### Answer 1

NIAS employs a system known as “call flagging” whereby clinical or other details linked to a specific address can be added to our computerised control and dispatch systems. Subsequent calls to the specific address will trigger an on-screen message to the emergency dispatcher as to the specific details or requirements of the patient whose details have been registered with the information. This information is then copied to the mobile data terminal in the responding ambulance vehicle, and is often conveyed by radio directly to the responding crew member(s) as well. Please note that this system is limited to a specific address, and calls to the same patient arising outside of the given address will not trigger the alert. We therefore encourage the practice of patients with complex needs etc. holding copies of their care plans, wearing med-alert bracelets etc

#### Question 2

What systems or technologies does the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service NHS Trust have in place that allow either NHS staff or patients to alert the trust in advance of any 999 call who the high-risk risk outpatients are who are likely to have an unplanned admission and/or have complex care needs?

#### Answer 2

See response to question 1. NIAS frequently receives notifications via email, in writing and by phone from other NHS staff and to a lesser degree directly from patients / carers regarding patients with special requirements which can then be added to the control system as call flags. These requests are reviewed by the medical directorate before being added

#### Question 3

If a consultant at a hospital trust produces an emergency care plan for one of their outpatients, is this communicated to the ambulance trust in advance and then used during a 999 call response?



### **Answer 3**

This requires the clinician responsible for the patient to directly notify the ambulance service of the relevant information and specific requirements for a given patient. This occurs on a frequent basis and is seen as good practice. However, NIAS has presently no system for obtaining this information unless actively notified of it. Where such plans have been provided to the ambulance service, the details will be added as per the response to question 1.

### **Question 4**

How many Duchenne muscular dystrophy patients who have been treated by your ambulance trust over the last 5 calendar years? (broken down per year?)

### **Answer 4**

Command and Control 999 records have been accessed and no records have been identified relating to Ducenne muscular dystrophy patients.

### **Question 5**

How many muscular dystrophy patients who have been treated by your ambulance trust over the last 5 calendar years? (broken down per year)

### **Answer 5**

Please find detailed below breakdown of attendances to muscular dystrophy patients broken down by calendar year and relevant Trust area.

Year of Call	Local Commissioning Group Area					NI
	Belfast	South Eastern	Northern	Southern	Western	
2012	1	2		1		4
2013				1		1
2014				1		1
2015		1	1			2
2016				1	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>

### **Question 6**

How many patients with Duchenne and/or with muscular dystrophy have made complaints to your trust about the care they have received following an emergency call out over the last 5 calendar years? (broken down per year)

### **Answer 6**

The Trust does not hold information in this format. The DATIX system that records complaints investigation captures the issues the complainant is raising but does not code the medical condition of the patient.

I hope the above 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](mailto: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***

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**Alison Vitty (Miss)**  
**CORPORATE MANAGER**