



Freedom of Information Team
De La Court House
Queen Alexandra Hospital
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Portsmouth
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PO6 3LY

Name:
Email:
Date: 24/07/2023
Ref: 23-24 196

Dear

RE: Freedom of Information request

Thank you for your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which was received by the Trust on 28/06/2023. Please see responses to your requests below.

- 1. Since 2018 until now, how many complaints have you had about potential excessive exposure to Nitrous Oxide via Entonox and prolonged exposure of staff to high levels of nitrous oxide? Please provide these figures broken down year-by-year eg. 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 so far.**

The Trust have no formal complaints about potential excessive exposure to Nitrous Oxide via Entonox and prolonged exposure of staff to high levels of nitrous oxide.

- 2. Have you ever suspended the use of Entonox or any other inhaled as an inhalation analgesic for women in labour in either hospital setting or at home births? If so, please state how many times per year its use has been suspended since the first suspension was recorded.**

The use of Entonox has not been suspended in our trust.

- 3. On average, how long has the use of Entonox been suspended for?**

Please see answer in question 2.

- 4. Have you currently suspended or removed Entonox as an inhalation analgesic for women in Labour in either hospital setting or at home births, or are you planning to in the future?**

The use of Entonox is not currently suspended or removed, and there are no imminent plans to suspend the use of Entonox.

- 5. Do you have ventilation/scavenger units to remove Entonox in your maternity unit? If yes, how old are the ventilation/scavenger systems on the maternity wards and when they last updated/repared?**

There are no scavenger units on the maternity ward, however the ventilation in the hospital is based on a modern build. Ventilation has been checked and was within acceptable limits (10 cycles per hour) in most areas. There are a few areas that require 'balancing' via the ventilation system (where air change cycles are more frequent in some rooms than in others). This work is scheduled to be undertaken by the building management team.

6. On average, how much exposure do maternity staff have to Entonox in a week and how often do you monitor the levels?

The amount of exposure to maternity staff is unknown. Testing is about to be undertaken.

7. Have you had any staff who have been exposed to Entonox in excess of the Workplace Exposure Limit (WEL) of 100ppm (eight-hour time weighted average) under COSHH Regulations 2002, and what were the levels of exposure?

No testing has been undertaken yet. This is being arranged.

8. Is there currently any legal action involving your staff in relation to this?

There is no current legal action in progress in relation to Entonox use.

Please accept this letter as completion of your request. Please note that copies of this request will be held on file for three years before being confidentially destroyed.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your request, please contact our Head of Information Governance on Information.Governance@porthosp.nhs.uk or write to the above address and we will conduct an internal review. Upon review, if you are still dissatisfied, you may appeal our decision by contacting the Information Commissioner's Office; for more information, please visit the [ICO's website](#).

Please be aware, if we do not receive an appeal within 30 days of you receiving this letter, we will assume that you are satisfied with our response. If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Team