

Our ref: CB/SF/ajb/20091112 FOI535 Edwards
Your ref:
Date: 12 November 2009

Please reply to:
Lockton House
Clarendon Road
Cambridge
CB2 8FH

Anna Edwards

By email to: request-21438-2446b8c1@whatdotheyknow.com

Switchboard: 01223 725400

Direct Tel: 01223 725585

Fax: 01223 725401

Email: chris.banks@cambridgeshire.nhs.uk

Website: www.cambridgeshire.nhs.uk

Dear Ms Edwards

Freedom of Information Request - Swine Flu Misdiagnoses and Complaints

I am writing further to your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 dated 20 October 2009. Please see NHS Cambridgeshire's response below:-

*Do GPs biologically test for swine flu or do they follow guidelines from general advice?
Are all suspected swine flu cases biologically tested?*

Cases of swine flu are no longer being confirmed routinely with laboratory tests. The diagnosis is now clinical. This has been the national policy since 2 July 2009 when the treatment phase of the UK response to the swine flu pandemic was announced by the Secretary of State for Health.

How many misdiagnoses have there been in the past six months?

NHS Cambridgeshire does not collate information on the numbers of misdiagnoses of swine flu within the past six months, as this information would generally be held within GP practices. There is some national work collated by the HPA which involves laboratory testing of a limited number of samples from patients who have used the NPFS or have attended their GP surgery with flu like symptoms, which indicates what proportion of these patients test positive for H1N1.

How many deaths have been biologically proved as the result of swine flu in the same period?

Information on swine flu deaths in the East of England is made available regularly in the SHA weekly update on swine flu H1N1, which is posted on the East of England SHA website (www.eoe.nhs.uk) in the 'latest news' section every Thursday. The weblink to the most recent update is:

<http://www.eoe.nhs.uk/news.php?id=203>

Please note that in relation to swine flu deaths, the SHA website specifically states '*Please note that for reasons of patient confidentiality we will not be disclosing the location or any details of patients who are or have been treated for swine flu.*'

Have there been any complaints about misdiagnosis?

There has been one complaint received by Cambridgeshire PCT in relation to misdiagnosis of Swine Flu.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Banks". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'C'.

CHRIS BANKS
Chief Executive