



**Ambulance Headquarters**

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**Our Ref: FOI.19.267**

Jeremy Andrews

E-mail: request-614717-fce6ff2d@whatdotheyknow.com

26 November 2019

Dear Mr Andrews

**Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Information Request**

Thank you for your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act which was received on 23 October 2019. I can confirm that we hold the information you have requested. You asked the following questions, reproduced in **bold** below:

**I would like to know what the budgeted amount is for the financial year of April 2019-April 2020 for use of private ambulance services.**

£0. (The use of third Party patient transport by NEAS is based solely on the demand placed on NEAS services during peak demand and subject to the needs of the public we serve. As such, NEAS do not have a budget for this provision as it is an unknown quantity. )

**I would also like a breakdown of the percentage they are used for 999 Services, Urgent care (LAT) services and Patient transport services.**

The following table lists the number of calls where a Private/Third Party ambulance (e.g. St John Ambulance, British Red Cross, etc) arrived at scene on an Unscheduled call (Emergency or Urgent), and the number of calls where a private ambulance carried out, or aborted, a journey on a Scheduled call.

Please note that on Unscheduled calls, multiple vehicles may have attended the same call due the severity and/or specialist response needed (i.e. a mixture of rapid response, Private, Third Party and Trust vehicles).

Date	Call Type	Calls with 1 or more Private/Third Party ambulances	All Unscheduled & Scheduled calls	Percentage
1 April to 30 Sept '19 inclusive	Unscheduled (Emergency/Urgent)	5,605	212,209	2.64%
	Scheduled	60,937	330,942	18.41%

**How are these services vetted to ensure that the service, staff and vehicles are up to the same standard you expect to receive from the NHS Trust.**

The Trust uses third party providers during periods of peak demand (e.g. Winter pressures) to supplement our coverage and ability to respond to increased call numbers and within specific commissioned contracts (e.g. transport to/from dialysis clinics). We access the providers through a framework agreement, where the providers have been evaluated against service specification(s) required by the Trust. Part of this specification is clear focus on achieving and maintaining clinical standards, as well as staff DBS checks and adherence to NEAS policies. We are able to use the providers as and when necessary depending on the nature of our demand and pressures, but without minimum levels of commitment/work. The framework agreement details the costs per hour/mile of the various options, and for unscheduled/emergency use we predominantly access suppliers based on shortest response distance to the patient.

Why we retain access:

- The providers are able to provide cover during periods of recruitment
- They are able to immediately provide a presence if we are asked to meet a change in provision of service by the hospitals
- They can provide short term cover for the pressure we experience at Winter, Easter, etc.
- They can be used for a short term need and to support at events (e.g. sporting events, public displays, etc)

Each provider will go through a rigorous governance arrangement with the CQC and NEAS do not use providers who are not registered and maintaining clinical standards. They are also regularly audited throughout the year to ensure adherence to policies and expected standards.

If you are not satisfied with the information we have provided, you can request an internal review which will be carried out by Mr Paul Aitken-Fell, who is the Trust's Consultant Paramedic and is someone not involved with your original request.

If you wish to follow this route, please contact [audrey.turnbull@neas.nhs.uk](mailto:audrey.turnbull@neas.nhs.uk) who will commence the process on your behalf.

If you remain unhappy with the outcome of the review, you can ultimately complain to:

The Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely



Mark Cotton  
**Freedom of Information Lead**