



**Surrey and Sussex Healthcare**  
NHS Trust

***Please reply to:***

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Our ref: 5825

27 December 2019

Dear Feargal

**Freedom of information request**

I am writing in response to your request for information which has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Please provide the commercial and administrative rationale for issuing prescriptions at ESH which can only be redeemed at the ESH branch of Boots?

**Rationale:**

Until December 2010 all outpatient prescriptions at East Surrey Hospital were dispensed by the hospital pharmacy department. These prescriptions were only valid at the hospital pharmacy which resulted in significant backlogs in the dispensary due to the volume of prescriptions. This was the model in most NHS hospitals in England, although many are now outsourcing their dispensing to a single supplier community pharmacy.

In January 2011 we moved to the use of FP10 (HP) prescriptions that could be taken to a community pharmacy to relieve the increasing demand on our pharmacy team. This arrangement was not ideal not least because there was often a long time between the prescription being written and the prescription being taken to a community pharmacy.

A plan was therefore put in place to repatriate the work to the hospital site via a third party (Boots). This allowed the Trust pharmacy team to concentrate on inpatient work whilst Boots pharmacy service focuses on provision of outpatient dispensing and over-the-counter sales of medicines.

Also, hospital contract prices would not be available to community pharmacists working from FP10(HP) so the prices of specific products would rise significantly.

To note there are also clinical and safety reasons associated with this model.

I hope this information is helpful, but if you are unhappy with our response, or the way in which your request has been handled, you may request an independent internal review. This would be undertaken by an appropriate senior member of staff at the Trust, who has had no involvement in dealing with your original request. We aim to deal with internal reviews within 20 working days following receipt. If you wish to request one, please set out your grounds for asking for the review in writing and send it by post or email:

By post: Please address your letter to “Freedom of Information – Information Access Appeal” and send it to our address as shown on this letter.

By Email: Emails should be clearly marked ‘Information access appeal’ and sent to: [sash.foi@nhs.net](mailto:sash.foi@nhs.net).

Should you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you would have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO). However, I should point out that under section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, you are obliged to exhaust the Trust’s own internal review process before appealing to the ICO. The ICO’s contact details are:

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

Tel: 0303 123 1113  
<http://ico.org.uk>

We would also welcome your feedback on how well we met your expectations in handling your FOIA request. If you have a couple of minutes, please click on this [link](#) to complete our Freedom of Information Customer Satisfaction Survey and let us know about your experience. The survey is anonymous – unless you choose to provide your reference number.

Please contact me, quoting our reference, if you have any queries concerning this letter and I will be happy to help.

Yours sincerely

Jeanette Randall  
FOI Officer