

Compliance Team – Health Records

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FOI REQUEST NUMBER 221-2015

Request:

My request is regarding hospital admissions for people suffering ill effects as a result of taking so-called legal highs.

These are officially described as New Psychoactive Substances (NPS), and include “Spice”, a laboratory-created cannabis substitute, nitrous oxide (“laughing gas”), and other chemicals.

For each of the financial years 2011/12, 2013/14 and 2014/15, can you please specify:

- The number of people admitted to your hospital(s) as a result of taking NPS
- The number of deaths at your hospital(s) in people recorded as having taken NPS
- The type of substance in each case (if known)
- The gender of the patient in each case
- Please provide the data by way of a month-by-month breakdown
- Please indicate if the patient was treated in A&E or on a different ward

Response:

I can confirm that our Trust Alcohol and Drugs Service (Norfolk Recovery Partnership (NRP) provide the substance misuse liaison service at the Norfolk Acute hospitals (Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital, James Paget Hospital and the Queen Elizabeth II Hospital). Although they are asked to see patients who attend Accident and Emergency Wards because of health conditions and refer to taking NPS's they do not collect data as it has been requested. The NRP staff role is to assess and offer access to NRP community treatment services for further help but for NPS use it is rare that this offer of help is taken up.

Our Trust does not have access to the acute hospital admission statistics. The Accident and Emergency Wards (who have in excess of 100,000 admissions per year) do not routinely inform us of NPS admissions and as our Trust is a 9-5 service we would not necessarily become aware of all admissions. Therefore, we would suggest that the information you have requested may be able to be supplied by the acute trusts.