



### FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

**Request No:** AD-IG-01(2)-72-2017  
**Key Word:** Hypothermia  
**Subject:** Hypothermia  
**Request:**      **Date Received:** 06/06/2017  
                         **Monitoring Date:** 07/06/2017  
                         **Date of Response:** 26/06/2017

Thank you for your request for information received on 6 June 2017 and which was dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. We would also inform you that Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) Health and Social Care Trust has now completed its search for the information you requested and which is detailed below and attached for your attention.

#### Question 1

How many hypothermic patients did the Trust treat last year?

#### Answer 1

Please refer to attachment labelled FOI\_72\_Ans1 which is based on information from June 2016 to May 2017. The Trust used the following criteria were used to determine whether a patient would be treated for hypothermia:

- All calls with a Chief Complaint of "HEAT / COLD EXPOSURE" where the subcode specifies Cold exposure;
- All calls with a Chief Complaint of "FALLS" where the subcode specifies "Environmental problems (rain, heat, cold)" and "What's the Problem"/PRFs indicates that the problem is Cold;
- All calls where "What's the Problem" contains Hypothermia (or variations on spelling);
- All calls where "What's the Problem" mentions temperatures of 35°C or less

We further checked Patient Report Forms for the calls where "What's the Problem" mentioned temperatures of 35°C or less, and if the PRF recorded a temperature of higher than 35, we did not include this in the dataset provided.

We further included as examples 5 anonymised "What's the Problem's".

#### Question 2

Do you have a breakdown for the origin of the hypothermia into medical, trauma or environmental causes? If so, what are the numbers or %?

#### Answer 2

The Trust does not hold information in the format requested. We do not code hypothermia data into medical, trauma or environmental causes.



**Question 3**

Has your Trust ever used warmed IV fluids prehospitally?

**Answer 3**

Yes. NIAS A&E ambulances and rapid response cars are all routinely equipped with a fluid warmer device

**Question 4**

What method of warming do you use? Eg in-line warming device, ambulance warmer drawer, other.

**Answer 4**

A&E ambulances and rapid response vehicles are fitted with an electrically heated fluid warming pouch capable of holding approximately 3 litres of intravenous fluid

**Question 5**

How long have you been using this method?

**Answer 5**

10 years plus

**Question 6**

What are the identifying details of any purchased warming devices by make, model, cost?

**Answer 6**

The Trust uses the Napier Quill 'Emergo Thermo Bag'. The current cost of the bag is £421.60 and they are fitted to all A&E ambulances, rapid response cars and Officers vehicles (a fleet of circa 200 vehicles). There are additional costs for vehicle fitting kits and vehicle fitting, though these elements of cost are not readily available. Based on the Trust's five year rolling fleet replacement programme, a reasonable estimate of the total annual costs of the warming devices would be around 40 vehicles per annum at £500 each for the equipment and fitting (approximately £20k per annum)

**Question 7**

How successful have you found each method?

**Answer 7**

Only one method has been used and therefore we do not hold any comparative data. No formal assessment of the clinical effectiveness has been undertaken by our service

I hope the above and attached fully assists you. If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review. You should do this as soon as possible, or in any case within two months of the date of issue of this letter.

Please note that, under the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations, if you wish to publish or otherwise use this information besides for your own means, you will need to seek our permission to do so.

In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to the Finance and ICT Director, Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) HSC Trust, Site 30, Knockbracken Healthcare Park, Saintfield Road, Belfast, BT8 8SG.

If following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision maker, you remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request, you may make a complaint under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner's Office and ask that they investigate whether the Trust has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act. You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

**Website:** [ni@ico.org.uk](mailto:ni@ico.org.uk)

**Post:** Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow,  
CHESHIRE SK9 5AF

**Telephone:** 028 9027 8757 or 0303 123 1114 (Belfast based Office)

In most circumstances the Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out. However the Commissioner has the option to investigate the matter at his discretion. Please be advised that NIAS replies under Freedom of Information may be released into the public domain via our website @ <http://www.niamb.co.uk>.

Personal details in respect of your request will have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.

Yours sincerely

*Alison Vitty*

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**Alison Vitty (Miss)**  
**CORPORATE MANAGER**