

2 December 2016

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**By email**

Dear [REDACTED]

### **Request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the “FOI Act”)**

I refer to your email of 9 November in which you requested information under the FOI Act. Since 1 April 2016, Monitor and the NHS Trust Development Authority are operating as an integrated organisation known as NHS Improvement. For the purposes of this decision, NHS Improvement means the TDA.

### **Your request**

You made the following request:

*“1. How many incidents have been logged on the National Reporting and Learning System (NRLS) in the last 10 years to 09/11/16 that contain either of the following phrases in the free text: "sat nav" or "satellite navigation". For each year, please list how many incidents were reported as resulting in no harm, low harm, moderate harm, severe harm, or death.*

*2. For each incident, please provide me with a summary of what took place. This should include the type of care setting in which the incident took place, and whether the incident was reported as resulting in no harm, low harm, moderate harm, severe harm, or death.”*

### **Decision**

NHS Improvement does hold information relevant to your request.

The information we hold is from the National Reporting and Learning System (NRLS). By way of background, some information about the NRLS may be helpful. The primary purpose of the NRLS is to enable learning from patient safety incidents occurring in the NHS. The NRLS was established in late 2003 as a largely voluntary scheme for reporting patient safety incidents, and therefore it does not provide the definitive number of patient safety incidents occurring in the NHS.

All NHS organisations in England and Wales have been able to report to the system since 2005. In April 2010, it became mandatory for NHS organisations to report all patient safety incidents which result in severe harm or death. All patient safety incident reports submitted to the NRLS categorised as resulting in severe harm or death are individually reviewed by clinicians to make sure that we learn as much as we can from these incidents, and, if appropriate, take action at a national level.

The NRLS is a dynamic reporting system, and the number of incidents reported as occurring at any point in time may increase as more incidents are reported. Experience in other industries has shown that as an organisation's reporting culture matures, staff become more likely to report incidents. Therefore, an increase in incident reporting should not be taken as an indication of worsening of patient safety, but rather as an increasing level of awareness of safety issues amongst healthcare professionals and a more open and transparent culture across the organisation.

A recent search of the NRLS was carried out of all incidents reported as occurring between the dates 1<sup>st</sup> January 2006 to 9<sup>th</sup> November 2016 if these had been uploaded to the NRLS by 20 November 2016 using the free text terms 'sat nav' and 'satellite navigation'.

The search resulted in a total of 667 patient safety incidents reported during 1<sup>st</sup> January 2006 and 9<sup>th</sup> November 2016 and Annex 1 below provides the breakdown as requested in point 1 of your request.

In relation to point 2 of your request we are able to provide a breakdown of the care setting where the incidents were reported as occurring and by severity of harm as reported by the original reporter, please see Annex 2 below, however, we are unable to provide the summary of 'what took place' because to do so would exceed the cost limit under section 12 of the FOI Act.

#### *Cost limit under section 12 of the FOI Act*

Under section 12(1) of the FOI Act, NHS Improvement is not required to comply with any request that potentially exceeds the relevant cost limit. The relevant cost limit is £450, which is set out in The Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004. This equates to a period of approximately eighteen hours in which to locate, retrieve and extract the information that you have requested.

In NHS Improvement's view, compliance with your request will exceed this limit because the scope of your request is very broad since it covers a time period of 10 years, and the volume of documents we would need to review to provide summaries of all relevant incidents is significant because there are 667 incidents within the scope of your request. To review the free text and provide summaries of all of those incidents would take more than 18 hours.

#### *Advice and assistance under section 16 of the FOI Act*

Under section 16 of the FOI Act, NHS Improvement is required, as a public authority, to provide advice and assistance so far as is reasonable, to individuals who have made a request to it under the FOI Act.

Given NHS Improvement's indication above of the volume of documentation that would need to be reviewed to locate the information sought, NHS Improvement would provide the following indications to assist you to make a request that can be complied with, without the time limits in section 12 becoming applicable. You may wish to:

- narrow the scope of your request, for example, to a shorter time period or to a specific degrees of harm such as moderate, severe and/or death; and/or
- describe more precisely the information sought: although the incidents resulting from the search presented in Annexes 1 and 2 below contain the terms 'sat nav' or 'satellite navigation', these terms may not have necessarily had an impact on patient safety nor the outcome of the incident.

You may also be interested in a Patient Safety Alert on ambulance dispatch and satellite navigation systems which was issued on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2015 by the Patient Safety Team whilst at NHS England. This was issued to all NHS ambulance trusts, and any other providers relying on satellite navigation systems to provide urgent healthcare, to ensure their systems are kept up to date. The patient safety alert can be found here:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/2015/07/psa-alert-amb-nav/> .

I hope you find this information helpful.

### **Review rights**

If you consider that your request for information has not been properly handled or if you are otherwise dissatisfied with the outcome of your request, you can try to resolve this informally with the person who dealt with your request. If you remain dissatisfied, you may seek an internal review within NHS Improvement of the issue or the decision. A senior member of NHS Improvement's staff, who has not previously been involved with your request, will undertake that review.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of any internal review, you may complain to the Information Commissioner for a decision on whether your request for information has been dealt with in accordance with the FOI Act.

A request for an internal review should be submitted in writing to FOI Request Reviews, NHS Improvement, Wellington House, 133-155 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8UG or by email to [nhsi.foi@nhs.net](mailto:nhsi.foi@nhs.net).

### **Publication**

Please note that this letter and the attached information will shortly be published on our website. This is because information disclosed in accordance with the FOI Act is disclosed to the public at large. We will, of course, remove your personal information (e.g. your name and contact details) from the version of the letter published on our website to protect your personal information from general disclosure.

Yours sincerely,

**NHS Improvement**

**Annex 1: Total number of incidents with 'sat nav' or 'satellite navigation' in the free text, broken down by year by degree of harm**

Year	Degree of harm (severity)					Total
	No Harm	Low	Moderate	Severe	Death	
2006	16	0	0	0	0	16
2007	18	1	0	0	0	19
2008	26	5	0	0	0	31
2009	49	0	1	1	0	51
2010	42	3	3	0	1	49
2011	42	17	6	2	0	67
2012	39	14	1	0	1	55
2013	50	17	3	0	1	71
2014	101	14	3	1	0	119
2015	75	23	1	0	0	99
2016	59	30	0	1	0	90
<b>Total</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>667</b>

**Annex 2: Total number of incidents with 'sat nav' or 'satellite navigation' in the free text, broken down by year by care setting by degree of harm**

Year	Care Setting of Occurrence	Degree of harm (severity)					Total
		No Harm	Low	Moderate	Severe	Death	
2006	Acute / general hospital	5	0	0	0	0	5
	Ambulance service	9	0	0	0	0	9
	Community nursing, medical and therapy service (incl. community hospital)	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Community pharmacy	0	0	0	0	0	0
	General practice	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Learning disabilities service	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Mental health service	0	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Year total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16</b>
2007	Acute / general hospital	6	0	0	0	0	6
	Ambulance service	12	1	0	0	0	13
	Community nursing, medical and therapy service (incl. community hospital)	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Community pharmacy	0	0	0	0	0	0
	General practice	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Learning disabilities service	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Mental health service	0	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Year total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>19</b>
2008	Acute / general hospital	11	1	0	0	0	12
	Ambulance service	12	1	0	0	0	13
	Community nursing, medical and therapy service (incl. community hospital)	2	2	0	0	0	4

	<b>Community pharmacy</b>	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
	<b>General practice</b>	1	0	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
	<b>Learning disabilities service</b>	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
	<b>Mental health service</b>	0	1	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
	<b>Year total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>2009</b>	<b>Acute / general hospital</b>	8	0	0	0	0	<b>8</b>
	<b>Ambulance service</b>	33	0	0	1	0	<b>34</b>
	<b>Community nursing, medical and therapy service (incl. community hospital)</b>	7	0	0	0	0	<b>7</b>
	<b>Community pharmacy</b>	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
	<b>General practice</b>	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
	<b>Learning disabilities service</b>	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
	<b>Mental health service</b>	1	0	1	0	0	<b>2</b>
	<b>Year total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>2010</b>	<b>Acute / general hospital</b>	10	2	0	0	0	<b>12</b>
	<b>Ambulance service</b>	28	1	3	0	1	<b>33</b>
	<b>Community nursing, medical and therapy service (incl. community hospital)</b>	2	0	0	0	0	<b>2</b>
	<b>Community pharmacy</b>	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
	<b>General practice</b>	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
	<b>Learning disabilities service</b>	1	0	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
	<b>Mental health service</b>	1	0	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
	<b>Year total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>2011</b>	<b>Acute / general hospital</b>	13	7	2	0	0	<b>22</b>
	<b>Ambulance service</b>	22	9	4	2	0	<b>37</b>
	<b>Community nursing, medical and therapy service (incl. community hospital)</b>	7	0	0	0	0	<b>7</b>

	<b>Community pharmacy</b>	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
	<b>General practice</b>	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
	<b>Learning disabilities service</b>	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
	<b>Mental health service</b>	0	1	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
	<b>Year total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>2012</b>	<b>Acute / general hospital</b>	12	2	0	0	0	<b>14</b>
	<b>Ambulance service</b>	21	10	0	0	1	<b>32</b>
	<b>Community nursing, medical and therapy service (incl. community hospital)</b>	6	2	0	0	0	<b>8</b>
	<b>Community pharmacy</b>	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
	<b>General practice</b>	0	0	1	0	0	<b>1</b>
	<b>Learning disabilities service</b>	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
	<b>Mental health service</b>	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
	<b>Year total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>2013</b>	<b>Acute / general hospital</b>	13	2	0	0	0	<b>15</b>
	<b>Ambulance service</b>	24	10	3	0	1	<b>38</b>
	<b>Community nursing, medical and therapy service (incl. community hospital)</b>	8	3	0	0	0	<b>11</b>
	<b>Community pharmacy</b>	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
	<b>General practice</b>	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
	<b>Learning disabilities service</b>	0	1	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
	<b>Mental health service</b>	5	1	0	0	0	<b>6</b>
	<b>Year total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>2014</b>	<b>Acute / general hospital</b>	22	3	1	0	0	<b>26</b>
	<b>Ambulance service</b>	55	8	2	1	0	<b>66</b>
	<b>Community nursing, medical and therapy service (incl. community hospital)</b>	16	2	0	0	0	<b>18</b>

	<b>Community pharmacy</b>	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
	<b>General practice</b>	1	0	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
	<b>Learning disabilities service</b>	1	0	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
	<b>Mental health service</b>	6	1	0	0	0	<b>7</b>
	<b>Year total</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>2015</b>	<b>Acute / general hospital</b>	23	2	0	0	0	<b>25</b>
	<b>Ambulance service</b>	35	18	1	0	0	<b>54</b>
	<b>Community nursing, medical and therapy service (incl. community hospital)</b>	10	1	0	0	0	<b>11</b>
	<b>Community pharmacy</b>	4	0	0	0	0	<b>4</b>
	<b>General practice</b>	1	0	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
	<b>Learning disabilities service</b>	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
	<b>Mental health service</b>	2	2	0	0	0	<b>4</b>
	<b>Year total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>2016</b>	<b>Acute / general hospital</b>	17	4	0	0	0	<b>21</b>
	<b>Ambulance service</b>	31	23	0	1	0	<b>55</b>
	<b>Community nursing, medical and therapy service (incl. community hospital)</b>	9	2	0	0	0	<b>11</b>
	<b>Community pharmacy</b>	0	1	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
	<b>General practice</b>	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
	<b>Learning disabilities service</b>	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
	<b>Mental health service</b>	2	0	0	0	0	<b>2</b>
	<b>Year total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>90</b>