



East London
NHS Foundation Trust
Information Governance
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27 May 2025

Our reference: FOI DA6053

I am responding to your request for information received 13 May 2025. This has been treated as a request under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

I am now enclosing a response which is attached to the end of this letter. Please do not hesitate to contact me on the contact details above if you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely,

Information Rights Coordinator

If you are dissatisfied with the Trust's response to your FOIA request then you should contact us and we will arrange for an internal review of this decision.

If you remain dissatisfied with the decision following our response to your complaint, you may write to the Information Commissioner for a decision under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

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

Tel: 0303 123 1113
Web: www.ico.org.uk

Please note that the data supplied is not allowed to be re-used and/or published without the explicit consent of East London NHS Foundation Trust. Please contact the signatory to request permission if this is your intention



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Chief Executive Officer: Lorraine Sunduza
Chair: Eileen Taylor

Request: I would like to submit a request for information under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR) regarding health concerns linked to chemical flame retardants (CfRs), including those classified as persistent organic pollutants (POPs), used in furniture within your hospital facilities. Please provide the relevant information for the period between 1 January 2022 until the date this request is processed.

Please could you provide the following:

Question 1: The total number of reported incidents, complaints, or logged concerns received by your Trust in which patient health issues (e.g. skin irritation, respiratory symptoms, allergic reactions) were linked to chemical flame retardants (CfRs) present in hospital furniture (such as mattress covers, beds, chairs, cushions, or other furnishings) used in your facilities.

Answer: The Trust has reviewed question 1 of your request for information under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

Section 12(4a) of the Environmental Information Regulations Act 2004 states:

Exceptions to the duty to disclose environmental information
Section 12.— an exception to disclosure applies under paragraphs (4) or (5);
(4) For the purposes of paragraph (1)(a), a public authority may refuse to disclose information to the extent that—
(a) it does not hold that information when an applicant's request is received;

East London NHS Foundation Trust does not record the information requested. The Trust does not record whether incidents or complaints are linked to CfRs in hospital furniture. The Trust is therefore unable to provide a response.

Question 2: Details of any correspondence (internal or external), meeting minutes, or formal complaints that reference concerns about the health impacts of chemical flame retardants (CfRs) in furniture within your facility.

Answer: The Trust has reviewed question 2 of your request for information under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

Section 12(4a) of the Environmental Information Regulations Act 2004 states:

Exceptions to the duty to disclose environmental information
Section 12.— an exception to disclosure applies under paragraphs (4) or (5);
(4) For the purposes of paragraph (1)(a), a public authority may refuse to disclose information to the extent that—
(a) it does not hold that information when an applicant's request is received;

East London NHS Foundation Trust does not record the information requested and is therefore unable to provide a response.

Question 3: Information on whether your Trust has conducted or commissioned any safety reviews, risk assessments, or evaluations regarding the use of chemical flame retardants (CfRs) in hospital furniture.

Answer: The Trust works closely with its furniture suppliers. Our suppliers have confirmed that the products meet the required fire safety standards and are fully compliant with all applicable British Standards. The suppliers provide the Trust risk assessments and a declaration that POPs more generally are not used. Therefore, the Trust has not conducted or commissioned any specific



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safety reviews, risk assessments, or evaluations regarding the use of CFRs in hospital furniture.

Question 4: Details of any changes made to procurement policy, furniture specifications, or supplier contracts made in response to concerns about chemical flame retardants (CFRs) in furniture.

Answer: The Trust purchases from reputable suppliers that are aligned with the Trust's objectives and regulatory duties. The Trust has a number of additional considerations as the furniture is used in medium and low secure mental health settings. As a result, no changes have been made since January 2022 to the procurement policy, furniture specifications, or supplier contracts in response to concern about CFRs or POPs.



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