



East London

NHS Foundation Trust

Information Governance

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25 November 2025

Our reference: FOI DA6302

I am responding to your request for information received 10 October 2025. I am sorry for the delay in responding to your request. This has been treated as a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

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

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We promise to work together creatively to: learn
'what matters' to everyone, achieve a better quality
of life and continuously improve our services.
We care . We respect . We are inclusive

Chief Executive Officer: Lorraine Sunduza
Chair: Eileen Taylor

Request:

Question 1: Please provide the number of patients absconding from secure mental health wards for the years:

- 2020
- 2021
- 2022
- 2023
- 2024
- 2025

This should include incidents in which patients vanish from units or fail to return from authorised periods of leave.

Answer: Please see table below:

Calender year	Number of patients absconding from secure mental health wards (Forensic)*
2020	19
2021	22
2022	27
2023	30
2024	28
2025	21 to October 2025

* While considerable literature exists on absconsion from acute psychiatric units, the definition of absconsion used here involves breaching security of an inpatient unit, accessing grounds or community without permission, gaining liberty during escorted leave or being absent for longer than permitted from authorized or trial leave.



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