

Ref. No: 911
Date: 28/06/23
Subject: Nitrous Oxide

REQUEST

This is a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. My request relates to the use of nitrous oxide in healthcare settings.

I would like to request the following information:

1. Since 2018 until now, how many complaints have you had about potential excessive exposure to Nitrous Oxide via Entonox and prolonged exposure of staff to high levels of nitrous oxide? Please provide these figures broken down year-by-year eg. 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 so far.
2. Have you ever suspended the use of Entonox or any other inhaled as an inhalation analgesic for women in labour in either hospital setting or at home births? If so, please state how many times per year its use has been suspended since the first suspension was recorded.
3. On average, how long has the use of Entonox been suspended for?
4. Have you currently suspended or removed Entonox as an inhalation analgesic for women in Labour in either hospital setting or at home births, or are you planning to in the future?
5. Do you have ventilation/scavenger units to remove Entonox in your maternity unit? If yes, how old are the ventilation/scavenger systems on the maternity wards and when they last updated/repared?
6. On average, how much exposure do maternity staff have to Entonox in a week and how often do you monitor the levels?
7. Have you had any staff who have been exposed to Entonox in excess of the Workplace Exposure Limit (WEL) of 100ppm (eight-hour time weighted average) under COSHH Regulations 2002, and what were the levels of exposure?
8. Is there currently any legal action involving your staff in relation to this?

If you believe that answering this request exceeds the cost limit, please ignore questions 6 and 7.

RESPONSE

1. Nil
2. Nil
3. NA
4. N/A and No
5. Yes, ventilation and it's on a rolling programme
6. This cannot be answered as it's too variable
7. Nil
8. Nil