

Ref. No: 1171  
Date: 29/08/24  
Subject: toxicological screening procedures in A&E

## REQUEST

I write to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 regarding the toxicological screening procedures for individuals who present themselves to Accident and Emergency (A&E) departments and identify themselves as individuals who believe they might have been administered a substance without their consent.

To aid your understanding, this request pertains to procedures, information, testing, and advice, offered to those who would colloquially be referred to as individuals who believe they might have been “drugged” or “roofied”.

Specifically, I would like to request the following information:

### Procedures for Toxicological Screening:

1. What are the standard procedures for conducting screenings for individuals who believe they might have been administered a substance without their consent upon presenting to A&E?
2. Are there specific protocols for these situations, and if so, what are they?

If there is a document, flow chart or any other materials, pertaining to these procedures, please can these be attached to your reply.

### Information Provided to Patients:

3. What information is given to patients regarding the utility and limitations of testing conducted in your A&E setting, including the context of potential law enforcement or justice processes, if any?
4. Does this information make clear whether or not tests conducted in A&E are admissible in court? If so, what does it state?
5. What advice or support is provided to individuals during and after the screening process?

**6. Are there any follow-up procedures or referrals to other support services offered to these individuals?**

**If there is a document, flow chart or any other materials, provided to patients, please can these be attached to your reply.**

**Scope of Toxicological Testing:**

**7. What is the scope of screening conducted in your A&E? If available, what type of testing is used.**

**8. Are any specific drugs or substances prioritised or given special attention during these screenings?**

**Training:**

**9. Have A&E staff had specific and dedicated training about spiking? If so, please provide details of this training.**

## **RESPONSE**

St Helens and Knowsley Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust and Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust became a single legal entity known as Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2023, as such parts of the response may be provided in two sections relating to the hospital sites of each of the legacy organisations.

### **St. Helens and Knowsley response**

We do not routinely test to see if someone has been spiked. If a patient presents with symptoms, then these would be acted upon and bloods completed, however not a specific toxicology screen.

### **Southport and Ormskirk response**

We currently do not offer toxicology screening.