

Ref. No: 0994
Date: 07/06/24
Subject: Anaesthesia Associates

REQUEST

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. My request concerns the practice and supervision of Anaesthesia Associates (AAs) within your Trust.

Specifically, I would like to request the following information:

1. Please confirm whether Anaesthesia Associates at your Trust engage in any clinical practices that fall outside the Royal College of Anaesthetists (RcOA) Scope of Practice document for AAs. If so, please provide specific details of these practices.
2. Please provide copies of key local governance documents, such as standard operating procedures (SOPs) or policy documents, that enable or govern the practice of Anaesthesia Associates outside the RcOA Scope of Practice.
3. Please provide information on the supervision arrangements for Anaesthesia Associates (AAs) within your Trust, including:
 - a. The policy or guidelines governing the supervision of AAs.
 - b. Any specific criteria or conditions under which AAs may work without direct supervision.
 - c. The number of clinical sessions or lists in the past 4 months where AAs have worked without direct supervision.

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 1st 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.

- 1. Please confirm whether Anaesthesia Associates at your Trust engage in any clinical practices that fall outside the Royal College of Anaesthetists (RCoA) Scope of Practice document for AAs. If so, please provide specific details of these practices.**

St Helens and Knowsley:

We do not currently have any qualified AA's, although we do have two student AA's. On qualification they will practice within the 2016 RCoA Scope of Practice. Any possible future enhanced roles will follow forthcoming GMC regulation and follow RCoA guidance.

Southport and Ormskirk:

Yes, AA's engage in clinical practices that fall outside the Royal College of Anaesthetists (RCoA) Scope of Practice document for AA's. Specifically, under certain conditions the AA's may induce anaesthesia and begin emergence of anaesthesia with indirect supervision. Also, AA's have completed an extra local training module to enable safe performance of regional anaesthesia (enhanced role).

- 2. Please provide copies of key local governance documents, such as standard operating procedures (SOPs) or policy documents, that enable or govern the practice of Anaesthesia Associates outside the RCoA Scope of Practice.**

Please find information attached.

- 3. Please provide information on the supervision arrangements for Anaesthesia Associates (AAs) within your Trust, including:**

- a. The policy or guidelines governing the supervision of AAs.**

Please find information attached.

- b. Any specific criteria or conditions under which AAs may work without direct supervision.**

Please find information attached.

- c. The number of clinical sessions or lists in the past 4 months where AAs have worked without direct supervision.**

In the past 4 months there have been 172 sessions (half day operating list) worked by AA's with indirect supervision at Ormskirk Hospital.