

Ref. No: 0443  
Date: 13/11/23  
Subject: Tourniquets

## REQUEST

Under the *Freedom of Information Act*, I would like to request the following information:

1. The type and number of tourniquets used for venepuncture and cannulation annually in your Hospital Trust, specifically whether you use single use (disposable) or reusable tourniquets and what material they are made out of.
2. If you use a mix of both, whether there is any Trust policy for deciding which tourniquet to use.
3. When you first introduced single use tourniquets, if you do use them.
4. The cost per single use tourniquet / other type of tourniquet you use (or total annual cost).
5. The MRSA infection rates at your Trust, for three years either side of your introduction of single use tourniquets, referring to bloodstream infections (bacteremias) rather than surface carriage.
6. Whether you implemented any of the following infection control procedures within the same year as implementing single use tourniquets:
  - Stricter hand hygiene policy
  - Staff education programme on infection control procedures
  - Screening of patients for MRSA on admission to hospital
  - Isolation or decolonisation of patients who tested positive for MRSA

## 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.

- 1. The type and number of tourniquets used for venepuncture and cannulation annually in your Hospital Trust, specifically whether you use single use (disposable) or reusable tourniquets and what material they are made out of.**

Please find information attached.

- 2. If you use a mix of both, whether there is any Trust policy for deciding which tourniquet to use.**

The Trust does not have a specific policy which advises on the use cases of single use and reusable tourniquets.

- 3. When you first introduced single use tourniquets, if you do use them.**

St Helens and Knowsley:

We can confirm that single use tourniquets have been in use for at least 10 years, however, we are unable to ascertain the exact year.

Southport and Ormskirk:

The earliest spend date that we can identify for single use tourniquets is in 2015.

- 4. The cost per single use tourniquet / other type of tourniquet you use (or total annual cost).**

St Helens and Knowsley:

Total cost: £47,000 (part estimate as this was based on order history for items provided in response to question one, whereby information was sourced from reports filtered by word "tourniquet")

Southport and Ormskirk:

Total cost: £9,459 (part estimate due to a large number being contained in a bespoke Cannulation Pack)

- 5. The MRSA infection rates at your Trust, for three years either side of your introduction of single use tourniquets, referring to bloodstream infections (bacteremias) rather than surface carriage.**

Section 21: information reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means

Under Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act, Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust do not have to provide information to the applicant which is easily accessible by other means. Trust specific MRSA bacteraemia data is publicly available via the following link: [MRSA bacteraemia: annual data - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/mrsa-bacteraemia-annual-data)

**6. Whether you implemented any of the following infection control procedures within the same year as implementing single use tourniquets:**

- **Stricter hand hygiene policy**
- **Staff education programme on infection control procedures**
- **Screening of patients for MRSA on admission to hospital**
- **Isolation or decolonisation of patients who tested positive for MRSA**

Please note that the Trust is currently in the process of updating policies following the creation of Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust.

**Stricter hand hygiene policy:**

Hand Decontamination Policy – version 9 was implemented in 2012, with version 13 approved in September 2021.

**Staff education programme on infection control procedures:**

Enhanced education about MRSA was provided to staff approx. 2012-2013 onwards.

**Screening of patients for MRSA on admission to hospital / isolation or decolonisation of patients who tested positive for MRSA:**

Control of MRSA Policy – version 11 was implemented in 2012, with version 15 approved in September 2020.