

10 March 2026

Patient Safety & Cannula Discharge Protocols 2025

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I am requesting information regarding the Trust's protocols and recorded incidents involving peripheral venous cannulas. Please provide the following:

- 1. Incident Statistics (2025): The total number of recorded clinical incidents or "near misses" in the calendar year 2025 where a patient was accidentally discharged or left a Trust facility (including the Royal Victoria Hospital and Belfast City Hospital) with a cannula still in situ. Please break down by incident and near miss.**

There were 93 recorded incidents in the calendar year 2025 where a patient was accidentally discharged or left a Trust facility with a cannula still in situ.

Belfast Trust does not separately categorise "near misses". All such events are recorded as adverse incidents in line with the regional definition: *"Any event or circumstance that could have or did lead to harm, loss or damage to people, property, environment or reputation arising during the course of the business of a HSC organisation / Special Agency or commissioned service."*

Accordingly, Belfast Trust is unable to provide a separate breakdown of incidents versus near misses, as this information is not held.

- 2. Policy & Repercussions: A copy of the Trust's current policy or "Standard Operating Procedure" (SOP) regarding the removal of cannulas prior to patient discharge, including any documented clinical repercussions or risk assessments (e.g., risk of infection, embolism, or misuse) identified by the Trust.**

Please find attached the relevant Trust policies relating to cannulation and discharge from hospital.

The Trust does not hold any documentation relating to additional documented clinical repercussions or risk assessments specific to this matter.

Attached documents:

36333 Discharge & Transfer of Care for General Acute Hospital Sites and Intermediate Care Settings_attachment 1.pdf

36333 Venepuncture and Cannulation Policy_attachment 2.pdf

10 March 2026

3. Financial Penalties/Fines:

- **Does the Trust issue internal financial penalties or "fines" to specific departments or wards when a patient is discharged with a cannula still in situ?**

No

- **If yes, please provide the total number of such fines issued in 2025 and the total monetary value of these fines.**

N/A

- 4. External Fines: Has the Trust been issued any fines or financial penalties by external regulatory bodies (such as the RQIA or ICO) specifically related to patient discharge errors involving cannulas in 2025?**

No information recorded.