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Freedom of Information Act 2000

I am writing in response to your request for information made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in relation to late night discharges.

1. *How many patients were discharged from Tunbridge Wells Hospital between the hours of 11pm and 6am each year for the last five years?*
2. *If possible, can you tell me how many of these discharged themselves, were discharged by the hospital and how many were technically discharged because they had died?*
3. *How many patients were discharged from Maidstone Hospital between the hours of 11pm and 6am each year for the last five years?*
4. *If possible, can you tell me how many of these discharged themselves, were discharged by the hospital and how many were technically discharged because they had died?*

Please see the tables below:

TUNBRIDGE WELLS HOSPITAL			
Calender Year	DECEASED	MEDICAL ADVICE	SELF DISCHARGE
2010	221	2530	81
2011	202	2347	60
2012	200	1944	60
2013	221	1748	55
2014	196	1979	45

MAIDSTONE HOSPITAL			
Calender Year	DECEASED	MEDICAL ADVICE	SELF DISCHARGE
2010	252	1675	60
2011	211	1671	54
2012	173	822	28
2013	198	836	14
2014	183	1937	33

More than half of these overnight discharges are from the Clinical Decision Unit or Medical Assessment wards attached to A&E when patients, often accompanied by friends or family, elect to leave when no further medical intervention is required.

Another quarter of these patients are from Hedgehog – a children’s ward that takes emergency admissions from A&E. The same thing applies here – if the patient is well enough to leave and the parents happy to do so, a discharge in the middle of the night may be preferable when no further medical intervention is required.

Medical discharge includes those cases where the family is pressurising for an early discharge and the consultant considers the patient to be medically fit for discharge.