

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – NEURODEVELOPMENTAL REFERRALS

I write in response to your request for information in relation to neurodevelopmental referrals made in NHS Lothian.

Question:

Please could I have the following information for 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23, 2023/24 - broken down by year:

1. How many referrals have been made by GPs for assessments for ADHD for a) children and b) adults
2. How many referrals have been made by GPs for assessments for autism for a) children and b) adults

I understand that the board may not specify the neurodevelopmental conditions which referrals have been made in relation to. In this case, could you please provide the total number of referrals from GPs for all neurodevelopmental assessments in general in a) children and b) adults across these years?

Answer:

Data is not recorded separately for ADHD and ASD assessment. Children under the age of 7 are referred to the community paediatrics Child Development teams for ASD assessment. The data given below is for all neurodevelopmental referrals for adults, all ADHD referrals for children under the age of 18 and ASD referrals for children aged 7-18, and all referrals for children aged up to 7 years for Child Development assessment.

Before 2023, adult referrals for neurodevelopmental assessments were added to the general adult mental health waiting lists and therefore neurodevelopmental cases for patients who were seen for assessment prior to this date cannot be identified. The data included for 2022 is for patients still waiting when the waiting list changes were made, but the data for this year should be regarded as incomplete.

Neurodevelopmental referrals, NHS Lothian			
Year	Adult referrals (all)	Child referrals (all ADHD referrals, and ASD referrals for ages 7-18)	Child referrals (Child Development, age up to 7 years)
2019-20	-	293	879
2020-21	-	141	584
2021-22	-	37	723
2022-23	2,677	51	599
2023-24	3,085	52	502

Question:

3. How long is the waiting time in weeks for an ADHD assessment for a) children and b) adults

4. How long is the waiting time in weeks for an autism assessment for a) children and b) adults

I understand that the board may not specify the neurodevelopmental conditions which referrals have been made in relation to. In this case, could you please provide the average wait for neurodevelopmental assessments in general in a) children and b) adults across these years?

Answer:

As above, data is not recorded separately for ADHD and ASD assessment. The data given below is for all neurodevelopmental referrals for adults, all ADHD referrals for children under the age of 18, and ASD referrals for children aged 7-18. We are not able to give a specific waiting time for children under the age of 7 years referred to community paediatrics child development, as there are different waiting times for different stages of assessment.

Neurodevelopmental waiting times in weeks, NHS Lothian			
Year	Adult referrals (all)	Child referrals (all ADHD referrals, and ASD referrals for ages 7-18)	
2019-20	66	14	
2020-21	60	49	
2021-22	66	65	
2022-23	61	81	
2023-24	101	68	

I hope the information provided helps with your request.

If you are unhappy with our response to your request, you do have the right to request us to review it. Your request should be made within 40 working days of receipt of this letter, and we will reply within 20 working days of receipt. If our decision is unchanged following a review and you remain dissatisfied with this, you then have the right to make a formal complaint to the Scottish Information Commissioner within 6 months of receipt of our review response. You can do this by using the Scottish Information Commissioner's Office online appeals service at www.itspublicknowledge.info/appeal. If you remain dissatisfied with the Commissioner's response you then have the option to appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law.

If you require a review of our decision to be carried out, please write to the reviewer at the address at the top of this letter. The review will be undertaken by a Reviewer who was not involved in the original decision-making process.

FOI responses (subject to redaction of personal information) may appear on NHS Lothian's Freedom of Information website at: <https://org.nhsllothian.scot/FOI>

Yours sincerely

ALISON MACDONALD
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Cc: Chief Executive