

Date: 13/05/2024
Your Ref:
Our Ref: 8687

Enquiries to : Richard Mutch
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Direct Line: 0131 465 5687
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richard.mutch@nhs.scot

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – CANCER REFERRALS

I write in response to your request for information in relation to cancer referrals and dentistry.

Question:

- The number of suspected cancer referrals made by dentists in the financial year 2023/24.

Answer:

We are able to give the numbers of urgent suspicion of cancer referrals from dentists between 01/04/2023 - 31/03/2024. This is **76**. However, please note that this will not be all referrals as we cannot identify non 'urgent suspicion of cancer' referrals due to the way the data is structured.

Further numbers are not held in a centrally extractable format. Under the Freedom of Information Act NHS Lothian is not required to create new records to enable it to respond to your enquiry. This information is not collated or held in aggregate form and it would be necessary to review all case files relating to patients over the period you have requested to assemble the information you seek. Even if NHS Lothian did this – and there would be significant cost implications in doing so – it would be unable to respond in full to your request. The information requested is therefore exempt under section 12.1 – Cost.

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 FOI Reviewer at the email address at the head 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/Pages/default.aspx>

Yours sincerely

ALISON MACDONALD
Executive Director, Nursing, Midwifery and AHPs
Cc: Chief Executive