

Date: 24/05/2024  
Your Ref:  
Our Ref: 8692

Enquiries to : Richard Mutch  
Extension: 35687  
Direct Line: 0131 465 5687  
[loth.freedomofinformation@nhs.scot](mailto:loth.freedomofinformation@nhs.scot)  
[richard.mutch@nhs.scot](mailto:richard.mutch@nhs.scot)

Dear

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – GENDER SERVICES

I write in response to your request for information in relation to gender services within NHS Lothian.

### Question:

1. Total expense on hormone prescriptions for male-to-female transsexuals, annually, from 2010 to present
2. Total expense on hormone prescriptions for female-to-male transsexuals, annually, from 2010 to present
3. Total expense on puberty blocker prescriptions, annually, from 2010 to present
4. Total expense on all other gender services medication, annually, from 2010 to present
5. Total expense on all gender services medication, annually, from 2010 to present, broken down by pharmaceutical supplier and name of medical product.
6. Number of 'gender affirming surgeries' performed on patients whose gender services were the responsibility of your health board's gender identity services clinic, annually, from 2010 to present, and the cost of these surgeries. Please also break this down by type of surgery
7. Number of the above surgeries that had complications (broken down by the same metrics)
8. Number of patients, annually, who required subsequent corrective surgery after initial gender affirming surgery
9. Number of surgeries under (7) where issues had arisen due to improper post-operative procedure on the part of the patient

### Answer:

1.	Data specifically recording prescriptions/ drug use specifically for this case are not routinely captured (and are extremely difficult to capture as they are provided by a variety of different healthcare services/ providers); therefore, we are unable to provide total numbers or expense.
2.	The Pharmacy and Medicines Service hold no information that will enable us to answer these questions. The medicines in question are used for more than one clinical indication and there is no central record that links diagnosis to prescribed therapy. Prescribing of medicines for the indication in question can occur in several settings including GP practice and so no one financial cost centre is attributed to these drugs.*
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	All referrals for gender reassignment surgery are administered centrally for UK residents by the Gender Dysphoria National Referral Support Service which is based within NHS Arden and

	<p>Greater East Midlands Commissioning Support Unit. They are commissioned by NHS England to provide a service between the UK NHS Gender Identity Clinics and the hospitals in England which provide the surgery. They process referrals for adults who have been authorised for NHS specialised gender surgery in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.</p> <p>NHS Lothian can report on the number of REFERRALS authorised for gender affirming surgeries, as from 2016, for Lothian residents.</p> <p>Not all authorised referrals will result in surgery, as the patient may decide not to proceed in the eventuality. For data on numbers of people who have had surgery PERFORMED and the cost incurred please contact NHS National Services Scotland <a href="mailto:nss.foi@nhs.scot">nss.foi@nhs.scot</a> as the budget is held centrally here, for all gender reassignment surgeries performed on NHS Scotland residents.</p> <p>The following data from NHS Lothian provides information on the broad categories ‘male to female genital surgery’ and ‘female to male genital surgery’. The specific surgery that the patient goes on to have depends on their initial discussion with their surgeon, so at the point of referral authorisation, we cannot break down the data further into specific procedures.</p> <p><b>See table below</b></p>
7.	This is not routinely collected. No separate records are kept of patients coming to harm in gynaecology for gender reassignment surgery.*
8.	See table below
9.	We do not routinely capture this data.*
<p>*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.</p>	

Number of authorised referrals for Lothian residents to have NHS-funded gender reassignment surgery				
Year	Double mastectomy/masculinising chest reconstruction	Male to Female genital surgery	Female to Male genital surgery	Corrective revision surgery
2016	9	0	>0<5	0
2017	14	>0<5	>0<5	0
2018	27	12	>0<5	0
2019	20	11	>0<5	0

2020*	>0<5**	>0<5	0	0
2021	18	9	>0<5	>0<5
2022	32	>0<5	>0<5	>0<5
2023	39	19	6	>0<5
2024 (01.01.24 - 30.04.24)	24	13	>0<5	>0<5
*COVID-19 restrictions in place				
**Numbers fewer than five are reported as >0<5 to reduce the risk of deductive disclosure.				

To protect the identity of the individuals involved any figure of 5 or less has not been shown in the table above. Since we do not have their consent to release this data from their records, the information is exempt under section 38(1)(b) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act i.e. to provide it would breach the Data Protection Act (2018).

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](http://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.nhslothian.scot/FOI/Pages/default.aspx>

Yours sincerely

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