

Date: 24/05/2024
Your Ref:
Our Ref: 8697

Enquiries to : Richard Mutch
Extension: 35687
Direct Line: 0131 465 5687
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richard.mutch@nhs.scot

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – GIC REFERRALS

I write in response to your request for information in relation to GIC referrals since 2010.

Question:

- Annually, from 2010 to present, the age breakdown* of patients referred to gender identity services.

Answer:

See attached spreadsheet. We have grouped ages together as many stand alone ages would have had low or no numbers, allowing for the potential for individual patients to be potentially identified.

NHS Lothian have a policy of not revealing figures where the number is below 10 for sensitive categories such as abortion, teenage pregnancy, gender identity, alcohol and drugs. Because of the small numbers involved I am not able to provide you with the level of detail requested. To protect the identity of the individuals involved any figure of 10 or less has not been shown in the tables enclosed with this response. 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).

Question:

- Annually, from 2010 to present, the age breakdown of patients with whom a decision to treat was made.

Answer:

The decision to 'treat' and what that treatment is, is not routinely recorded outside of clinical records. 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.

Question:

- Annually, from 2010 to present, the age breakdown of patients who had prescriptions for gender-affirming hormones. Please provide your response in excel format if possible.

Answer:

These data are not routinely recorded outside of clinical records. 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.nhslotthian.scot/FOI/Pages/default.aspx>

Yours sincerely

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

Table 1: All referrals 2010-2024

Age group	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Blank	Total
<17*	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	22	16	31	52	62	52	61	36	21	<10	<10	362
17-20	<10	<10	<10	<10	17	45	90	114	128	125	104	130	137	195	49	<10	1151
21-25	<10	<10	<10	<10	26	30	49	62	69	77	79	93	122	125	27	<10	772
26-30	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	13	25	34	38	28	42	56	45	65	18	<10	380
31-35	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	14	14	<10	24	21	16	33	30	39	<10	<10	226
36-40	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	10	11	<10	13	<10	<10	14	11	20	<10	<10	121
41-45	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	11	<10	10	<10	12	<10	<10	13	<10	<10	<10	94
46-50	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	13	14	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	73
51-55	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	39
56-60	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	30
61>	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	36
Blank	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10	29
Total	**	**	20	27	81	161	219	301	359	348	314	406	415	491	118	37	3313

*Those aged under 17 were referred back to NHS Lothian from other providers (e.g. young people's gender services) but coded as 'Referred from GP' (ideally should have been coded to reflect referral from another service rather than GP). Age presented in these data reflect the age someone was at point of initial referral. NHS Lothian used initial NHS referral date for the patient so they were not unfairly disadvantaged when being placed on our waiting list.

** Combined figures still too small to release.