

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – PRIVATE HEALTHCARE PROVIDER

I write in response to your request for information in relation to private healthcare providers.

Question:

1. I would like to know how many nhs lothian patients were referred by nhs lothian employees to a private healthcare provider for diagnosis and or treatment for an injury or illness in the past 2 years.

Answer:

Response from Safe Haven office for out of area referrals (highly specialised healthcare)

Type of referral to private providers for highly specialised healthcare	Number of authorised referrals of Lothian residents		Cost
	2022	2023	
British Pregnancy Advisory Service (late termination of pregnancy 20-24 weeks)	18	14	Assessment consultation costs £174, procedure costs between £1145 - £2748 per patient.
Holiday Dialysis outwith Scotland – various providers in England and abroad (for NHS Lothian dialysis patients when travelling outside of Scotland).	27	44	Costs vary depending on country. The most expensive providers are private providers in London which charge £450 per session. Each patient travelling is capped at £3000 per year.
Second Skin suit fittings – for children with cerebral palsy	8	7	Costs vary depending on which type of body splint is used. Typical cost for a suit fitting is £2550.
Mesh removal – to Bristol Spire or Gynecologic & Reconstructive Surgery, Ltd in St Louis, USA	>0<5*	>0<5	Budget held centrally by NHS National Services Scotland, please ask nss.foi@nhs.scot for costs

Gender reassignment surgeries**	26	57	Costs are negotiated on a four nations basis by NHS England for whole of UK. Budget is held by NHS National Services Scotland for Scottish residents. Please ask nss.foi@nhs.scot for costs.
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*numbers fewer than five are reported as >0<5 to avoid risk of deductive disclosure.

**Referrals for gender reassignment surgeries go to both NHS and private hospitals under a nationally commissioned four-nation contract. The numbers shown here are those referred to private hospitals.

Financial Year	Outpatient Activity	Outpatient Total Cost	IP/DC Activity	IP/DC Total Cost
2022-23	14616	£2,674,781	3398	£3,523,765
2023-24	19879	£3,704,349	4682	£6,420,591

Question:

- I would like to know how many of these patients have sought advice/assistance from nhs lothian employees about how to combine nhs and private healthcare, and the advice/assistance they have received from the nhs lothian employees.

Answer:

Zero patients have been advised by Safe Haven office on this issue.

Question:

- I would like to know how many members of the general public have contacted nhs lothian employees in the past 2 years to enquire about how to combine nhs and private healthcare, and the advice/assistance they have received from the nhs employees.

Answer:

Safe Haven does not routinely receive such queries.

Scottish Government' Chief Medical Officer issued advice to NHS Boards on this issue in 2009. Please consult Scottish Government website for Reference SGHD/CMO (2009)3. Scottish Government issued further guidance for Health Boards in January 2023 regarding position of NHS Scotland where a person presents to NHS with problems resulting from privately arranged and funded surgery abroad. Please ask Scottish Government for this information.

Question:

4. I would like to know of those nhs lothian patients that were referred to a private healthcare provider by nhs employees for diagnosis and or treatment, how many did receive a combination of nhs and private healthcare to diagnose and or treat that injury or illness in the past 2 years.

Answer:

Not known.

Question:

5. I would like to know how much has nhs lothian been charged for the diagnosis and or treatment of these patients over the past 2 years by private healthcare providers.

Answer:

See above table for costs.

Question:

6. I would like to know who was responsible for overseeing the care of these patients (Primary medical professional) while they were receiving a combination of nhs and private healthcare to diagnose and or treat the injury or illness, for example -

- nhs/private healthcare gp,
- nhs/private healthcare consultant,
- nhs/private healthcare surgeon,
- or other nhs/private healthcare professionals or employees.

Answer:

Safe Haven is not able to answer this question.

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
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Cc: Chief Executive