

Date: 24/05/2024  
Your Ref:  
Our Ref: 8736

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Dear

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – MELANOMA

I write in response to your request for information in relation to Melanoma treatment.

Question:

1. What level of severity is Melanoma/suspected Melanoma treated as with respect to histology/pathology.

Answer:

When the referring clinician or Dermatologist states a patient prognosis of Melanoma, then the patient sample is classed as priority/urgent, and the laboratory prepares the patient sample with immediacy; there can be short laboratory preparation delays e.g. as the department is closed at the weekend.

Due to the high numbers of patient cases given a prognosis of Melanoma, the numbers of patient cases significantly exceed the capacity of the Dermatopathologists reporting the cases. To support prioritisation of diagnosing Melanoma, where cases exceed demand, these prioritised cases are separated from non-priority patient case workload to ensure they are reported as soon as they can be.

Question:

2. What is the expected timeframe for dermatology clinicians to receive results within NHS Lothian.

Answer:

Pathology department strives to report Melanoma associated patient cases in 8 weeks but depending on patient case demand i.e., numbers of cases indicated by clinicians with Melanoma prognosis, Consultant Dermatopathologist leave and additional testing the timeframe can extend in some patient cases to 11 weeks.

Question:

3. What is the current waiting time for Melanoma samples to be turned round.

Answer:

On the week commencing 13<sup>th</sup> of May there were cases awaiting to be assigned Pathologist review which were received by the Department on the 18<sup>th</sup> of March, this is within the 8-11 week period.

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.nhsllothian.scot/FOI/Pages/default.aspx>

Yours sincerely

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