

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – BRAIN TUMOUR PATHWAY

I write in response to your request for information in relation to brain tumour pathways in NHS Lothian.

Question:

Please provide information regarding the pathways used to diagnose adults and paediatric patients with brain tumours within NHS Lothian. Specifically, I am seeking details on the procedures, protocols, and guidelines followed by healthcare professionals for diagnosing adult and paediatric brain tumours. This includes, but is not limited to:

1. Referral pathways from primary care providers to specialists for suspected brain tumours.

Answer:

A number of referral pathways are in place for primary care. These are available on NHS Lothian's website at the following links. Please note that most referrals for brain tumour are from secondary care.

Radiology – headache suspicious of cancer:

<https://apps.nhsllothian.scot/refhelp/guidelines/radiology/headache-suspicious-of-cancer/>

Neurology – headache

<https://apps.nhsllothian.scot/refhelp/guidelines/neurology/headache/>

Neurology – headache, to CT or not to CT

<https://apps.nhsllothian.scot/refhelp/guidelines/neurology/neurology-headache-in-nhsllothian-to-ct-or-not-to-ct/>

Paediatric radiology / Neuroradiology

<https://apps.nhsllothian.scot/refhelp/guidelines/paediatric-radiology/neuroradiology/>

Neuro-oncology – see attached pathway.

Question:

2. The standard diagnostic tests and imaging techniques used for detecting brain tumours.

Answer:

The standard diagnosis is using CT or MRI scan of the brain. Functional MRI and DTI fibre tracking and MRI perfusion are also used.

Question:

3. Criteria or clinical indicators considered in the diagnostic process.

Answer:

The following indicators are considered, using the Detect Cancer Early checklist:

New neurological deficits;
Personality / behaviour changes;
Seizure activity;
Headache / visual disturbance;
Prior history of malignancy.

Question:

4. Any relevant guidelines or recommendations issued by NHS Lothian regarding the diagnosis of brain tumours.

Answer:

NHS Lothian does not issue guidelines but clinicians are part of the Scottish Adult Neuro-Oncology Network (SANON) and uses their guidelines:

Scottish Referral Guidelines for Suspected Cancer – brain and central nervous system cancers

<https://www.cancerreferral.scot.nhs.uk/brain-and-central-nervous-system-cancers/>

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 reviewer at the address at the top 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>

Yours sincerely

ALISON MACDONALD
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Cc: Chief Executive