

Dear

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REVIEW - MYRINGOTOMY

I write in response to your request for review of NHS Lothian's response to your Freedom of Information request about myringotomy and grommet insertion in NHS Lothian.

Having discussed your request and our response of 18 April 2021 further, I can respond as follows:

Original Request and Response:

**Question:**

*Question:*

*1. Can you tell me how many Myringotomys were carried out by NHS Lothian in the past 2 years?*

**Answer:**

*354 Myringotomy procedures have been performed in NHS Lothian in the past two years.*

**Question:**

*2. Of those carried out, how many cases had visual evidence of the fluid by the naked eye, CT scans or MRI scans before the procedure, and how many procedures were carried out without any visual confirmation of the fluid?*

**Answer:**

*It would be expected that all myringotomies would be carried out with visual tympanometry evidence of middle ear fluid or negative pressure.*

**Question:**

*3. Can you tell me the same information, for the same dates, for grommet insertion procedures?*

**Answer:**

*The majority of myringotomies are be carried out alongside grommet insertion. Information about stand alone grommet insertion is not collected centrally. Information may be held in individual patient records, but in order to provide the information you request it would be necessary to review each patient record over the period you have specified, requiring*

*significant resources. Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, NHS Lothian is not required to respond to your request if the resources required to do so equate to more than £600 in cost.*

Review Request:

Question:

1. - question 2 asks how many cases had visual evidence of fluid, by seeing it with the naked eye through an otoscope, microscope, or evidence obtained from CT or MRI scans prior to the Myringotomy, and how many had no visual evidence prior to the Myringotomy.

The response tells me about the "expectations" of persons unknown, and tympanic membrane tests. There is no mention of CT or MRI scans, or evidence gained with the naked eye.

A tympanic membrane test is not solely a visual test and part of the results are presented in a graph form and is not actual visual confirmation. I have also asked for detailed figures, not general expectations of persons unknown.

Answer:

I am advised that specific numbers of patients who had a CT or MRI scan before a myringotomy procedure, is not collected centrally. Information will be held in individual patient records, but in order to provide the information you request it would be necessary to review each patient record over the period you have specified, requiring significant resources. Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, NHS Lothian is not required to respond to your request if the resources required to do so equate to more than £600 in cost.

The approximate total cost of answering this request would be: £885. This sum has been calculated as follows: Number of records to be located and reviewed is 354, based on the number of myringotomy procedures carried out in the past two years. Estimated time to review each record is 10 minutes which equates to 59 hours' work at a minimum of £15.00 per hour for a member of staff to carry out the review.

Question:

I would like to ask for clarification of the response that I did receive, as it suggests that the only evidence that is required (or expected) in order to carry out a Myringotomy is evidence of middle ear fluid or negative pressure obtained by a tympanic membrane test, which would be partly in graph form. Is that the case?

Answer:

The procedure would be carried out based on history, examination and audiological assessment.

**Question:**

2. - question 3 asks for the same information as question 2, but for grommet insertion.

The response tells me it would require in excess of £600 and require "significant resources" to provide me with the information I have requested.

I would like to get a breakdown of the resources and expenses that Mrs Macdonald considers would be required, and would cost too much (under section 12 of the FOI Scotland Act 2002) to provide me with the information I have requested.

**Answer:**

The approximate total cost of answering this request would be: £885. This sum has been calculated as follows: Number of records to be located and reviewed is 354, based on the number of myringotomy procedures carried out in the past two years. Estimated time to review each record is 10 minutes which equates to 59 hours' work at a minimum of £15.00 per hour for a member of staff to carry out the review.

If you are not satisfied with this response you still have the right to make a formal complaint to the Scottish Information Commissioner who you can contact at the address below or 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.

Scottish Information Commissioner  
Kinburn Castle  
Doubledykes Road  
St Andrews, Fife  
KY16 9DS  
Telephone: 01334 464610  
Fax: 01334 464611  
e-mail: [enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info](mailto:enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info)

Yours sincerely

**Dona Milne**  
**Freedom of Information Reviewer/**  
**Director of Public Health and Health Policy, NHS Lothian**  
cc: Executive Nurse Director