

Date 06/06/2024  
Your Ref  
Our Ref 8776

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Dear

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – NURSING ABSENCES

I write in response to your request for information in relation to nursing absences within NHS Lothian.

### Question:

1. The number of instances of nurse absences due to stress, anxiety, depression or other psychiatric illness in total in the last three years.

Please express this data in two ways: firstly in calendar years (2022, 2023 and 2024 so far) and financial year (2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25 so far)

An FOI Clarification: By number of instances of absence I mean the overall number of absences recorded (which may include multiple absences taken by the same nurse several times).

2. The number of nurses by headcount who took an absence due to stress anxiety, depression, or other psychiatric illness in the last three years.

Please express this data in two ways: firstly in calendar years (2022, 2023 and 2024 so far) and financial year (2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25 so far)

An FOI Clarification: This request differs from request 1 because I am asking for the number of nurses who officially took an absence NOT the number of instances of absence which may count the same officer multiple times. For example, 350 nurses may have taken an absence but there may be 472 recorded instances of absence.

3. The number of working hours lost due to nurse mental health absences broken down in the last three years.

Please express this data in two ways: firstly in calendar years (2022, 2023 and 2024 so far) and financial year (2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25 so far). If you provide working days lost then please also express this in the same way.

Headquarters  
Waverley Gate  
2-4 Waterloo Place  
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Chair Professor John Connaghan CBE  
Interim Chief Executive Jim Crombie  
*Lothian NHS Board is the common  
name of Lothian Health Board*

An FOI Clarification: When I use the term Nurse I am referring to all bands/grades.

Answer:

Financial Year	Instances	Hours Lost	Headcount
2022/23	1,038	154,131.53	888
2023/24	1,277	161,804.32	969

Please note that previous data is downloaded and held in financial years.  
Excludes bank staff.

Includes staff absent within Nursing/Midwifery Band 5+.

Includes sickness absence reason 'Anxiety/stress/depression/other psychiatric illnesses'. This absence reason cannot be broken down further.

Hours lost within a working day can significantly vary from individual to individual. This can be anything from 1 hour to 12.5 hours.

We are not able to differentiate between work and non-work related absences.

Figures for each financial year only includes absence episodes that started and ended within the mentioned financial year.

We were unable to provide any data for current financial year as not enough time have passed yet for information to be accurate.

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