

Dear

Freedom of information – prison healthcare

I write in response to your request for information in relation to prison healthcare provided by NHS Lothian.

Question:

1. Please provide me with all details you can in relation to the number of prisoners in Scottish jails that the health board has treated in EACH financial year from 2012/13 onwards.
2. Please can you break the above information down for EACH of the last three financial years to show the types of medical assistance provided for prisoners, i.e. admissions for injuries, elective procedures etc.

Answer:

NHS Lothian provides healthcare services for two prisons: HMP Edinburgh and HMP Addiewell.

We are able to provide data for the last year from our referral spreadsheets as detailed in the table below.

Healthcare referrals from HMP Edinburgh and HMP Addiewell, November 2023 – November 2024		
Service	HMP Addiewell	HMP Edinburgh
Prison Healthcare Centre - Addictions	1,131	1,155
Prison Healthcare Centre – Blood Borne Virus	84	244
Prison Healthcare Centre – Dentist	452	1,097
Prison Healthcare Centre – Mental Health	2,619	2,097
Prison Healthcare Centre - Optician	237	575
Prison Healthcare Centre – Primary Care	5,717	7,419
Secondary Care – Hospital Appointment	703	680

Data from previous years is no longer available. 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.

Question:

3. In EACH of the last three financial years, how many NHS staff have been assaulted by prisoners from Scottish jails during the prisoner's NHS treatment/appointment? Please break the figures down to provide as much information as you can, i.e. whether the attack was sexual, physical or verbal in nature.

Answer:

Information about incidents involving prisoners which occurred in hospitals or other NHS Lothian sites is not collected centrally, as there is no specific coding in the adverse events recording system which would identify the patient as a prisoner. 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.

We do collect data about incidents which occur in the prison Healthcare Services within HMP Addiewell and HMP Edinburgh. The number of incidents is detailed in the table below. I have not released numbers of 5 or fewer in the table, as this information could lead to the identification of the individuals involved. Since we do not have their consent to release their personal data, the information is exempt under section 38 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 as to provide it would breach the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018.

Patient to staff aggression, Prison Healthcare Services, HMP Addiewell and HMP Edinburgh			
Incident category	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Patient to staff aggression – verbal	≤5	14	11
Patient to staff aggression – physical	≤5	≤5	≤5

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 <https://www.foi.scot/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

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Cc: Chief Executive