

Date: 28/02/2025  
Our Ref: 9750  
Enquiries to [loth.freedomofinformation@nhs.scot](mailto:loth.freedomofinformation@nhs.scot)

Dear

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – GP CONTRACTS

I write in response to your request for information in relation to GP contracts with NHS Lothian.

### Question:

I would be grateful if you could provide me with information regarding the contracts which Lothian NHS enters into with the various private GP practices which provide their services to the citizens of Edinburgh. My particular interest is in that of Whinpark Medical Centre, however if you are unable to disclose the details of this particular contract I will accept details of the typical contract which you have with all of the GP practices in Edinburgh.

In particular, I would appreciate knowing:

1. Whether any of these practices open seven or even just six days per week;
2. The minimum number of doctors (and ancillary staff such as nurses and administrative staff) to be employed by the practice and the number of patients this covers;
3. The minimum number of doctors to be on duty at any one given time and the number of patients this covers;
4. The amount of hours per week to be worked by each doctor and the number of patients this covers;
5. The minimum total number of hours to be worked per week by the total number of doctors in the practice and the number of patients this covers;
6. What arrangements should be made for locum doctors to substitute regular doctors when these are on holiday or are otherwise unavailable;
7. Whether the practice should accept requests for appointments submitted by e-mail and how these should be responded to.

### Answer:

The contracts between the Health Board and the GP practices are negotiated nationally as the General Medical Services (GMS) contract. The framework for provision of primary medical services under a GMS contract is laid out in the National Health Service (General Medical Services Contracts) (Scotland) Regulations 2018 and can be found online at the following link: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2018/66/contents/made>.

Most GP practices are independent contractors and will be open during the contracted hours of 0800 to 1800 Monday to Friday. Some practices offer extended hours appointments which may be on a Saturday.

As independent contractors, GP practices are responsible for their own staffing arrangements including locums, and their appointments arrangements. This is not specified in the GMS contract and NHS Lothian does not hold this information about GP practices.

GP practices are responsible for responding directly to Freedom of Information requests made to them, so you may be able to obtain the information you request by approaching Whinpark Medical Practice or any other practice directly.

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.nhsllothian.scot/FOI>

Yours sincerely

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