

Date 23/04/2025
Your Ref
Our Ref 9827

Enquiries to Richard Mutch
Extension 35687
Direct Line 0131 465 5687
loth.freedomofinformation@nhs.scot
richard.mutch@nhs.scot

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – COMMUNICATION

I write in response to your request for information in relation to communications expenditure.

Question:

1. The number of pagers/ beepers used within the health board and if possible, who this is used by, broken down by profession (e.g. doctors, nurses etc).

Answer:

NHS Lothian have 2,452 pagers. We do not hold names/roles for all devices in a centrally extractable format. Under the Freedom of Information Act NHS Lothian is not required to create new records to enable it to respond to your enquiry. This information is not collated or held in aggregate form and it would be necessary to review all departments in relation to pagers/bleepers to assemble the information you seek. Even if NHS Lothian did this – and there would be significant cost implications in doing so – it would be unable to respond in full to your request. The information requested is therefore exempt under section 12.1 – Cost.

Question:

2. The yearly spend on pager/ beeper devices for each financial year from 2018/2019 to 2024/25.

Answer:

2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/24
£148,132	£176,466	£133,707	£145,397	£114,050	£102,535	£125,400

Question:

3. The yearly spend on postage for each financial year from 2018/2019 to 2024/25.

Answer:

Below are the year on year postage costs as per what has been recorded on the ledger as POSTAGES INCL FRANKING costs for the whole of NHS Lothian.

Headquarters
Mainpoint
102 West Port
Edinburgh EH3 9DN

Chair Professor John Connaghan CBE
Chief Executive Professor Caroline Hiscox
*Lothian NHS Board is the common
name of Lothian Health Board*

2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
£804,800	£953,372	£804,800	£1,266,675	£1,484,705	£1,418,794	£1,728,397

Please the note that there are likely postage costs not included in the above as certain postage costs could be shown on the ledger as a contract payment rather than specifically identified as 'postage costs'. However the majority of costs should be included in the above table.

Question:

4. The number of working fax machines within the health board which have been used within the past 2 years (2023 and 2024).

Answer:

NHS Lothian has pursued a policy of removing fax machines across the organisation since 2014.

While this policy significantly reduced the presence of fax machines across NHS Lothian, it is acknowledged that some individual services or departments may have retained use of fax machines beyond this date. Although the use of fax machines is minimal, identifying the exact number of devices that remain operational and have been used specifically during 2023 and 2024 would require a manual audit across multiple departments and locations.

Under the Freedom of Information Act NHS Lothian is not required to create new records to enable it to respond to your enquiry. This information is not collated or held in aggregate form and it would be necessary to review all departments in relation to fax machines over the period you have requested to assemble the information you seek. Even if NHS Lothian did this – and there would be significant cost implications in doing so – it would be unable to respond in full to your request. The information requested is therefore exempt under section 12.1 – Cost.

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 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
Cc: Chief Executive