

Date 21/04/2025  
Your Ref  
Our Ref 9899

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Dear

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – CRITICAL CARE BEDS**

I write in response to your request for information in relation to critical care beds.

Question:

1. The total number of critical care beds (ICU) available within your health board area, please break this down by the number of beds at each hospital.

Answer:

Hospital	Bed Complement
Royal Hospital for Children and Young People	19
Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh	31
St John's Hospital at Howden	5
Western General Hospital	10

Question:

2. The total number of critical care beds (ICU) available within your health board area as of January 1st of each of the past 5 years (2021-2025). Please break this down by number of beds available each year.

Answer:

Month	Bed Complement
31 December 2020	74
31 December 2021	69
31 December 2022	69
31 December 2023	65
31 December 2024	65

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

## Question:

3. Monthly or weekly data on critical care bed (ICU) availability for patients for each month in the past 12 months (March 1st 2024 - March 1st 2025).
4. Monthly or weekly data on critical care bed (ICU) occupancy for each month in the past 12 months (March 1st 2024 - March 1st 2025).
5. The daily average for the number of critical care (ICU) beds available for patients each month in the past 12 months (March 1st 2024 - March 1st 2025).

## Answer:

Month	Q3. Available Staffed Bed Days	Q4. Occupancy	Q5. Average Daily Available Beds
March 2024	2,016	69.9	65.0
April 2024	1,950	70.1	65.0
May 2024	2,015	70.5	65.0
June 2024	1,951	74.5	65.0
July 2024	2,016	69.7	65.0
August 2024	2,015	70.0	65.0
September 2024	1,950	67.4	65.0
October 2024	2,015	68.4	65.0
November 2024	1,952	75.3	65.1
December 2024	2,016	75.2	65.0
January 2025	2,018	71.2	65.1
February 2025	1,820	69.9	65.0

## Question:

6. The number of instances of critical care (ICU) beds being unavailable due to staffing shortages for each year in the past 5 years (2021-2025).

## Answer:

Within Datix we have the category Category Staffing Issues, however this includes all staffing issues, not just staff shortages so we we need to look through each individual case. 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 case files relating to patients and staffing 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 am advised that it would be beneficial to look at the annual reports from the Scottish Intensive Care Society Audit Group. This will provide consistent, clinically validated reporting for ICUs across Scotland - <https://www.sicsag.scot.nhs.uk/index.html>

#### Sources

These outputs are taken from submissions used by PHS to compile publications concerning hospital beds National Guidance on this submission is here - [https://publichealthscotland.scot/media/23435/isd-s-1\\_manual.pdf](https://publichealthscotland.scot/media/23435/isd-s-1_manual.pdf) significant facility code 13 has been used to identify intensive care facilities (page 2-10 of above manual)

Bed Complement, Available Staff Beds Days and Occupied Bed Days (pages 3-3, 3-7, 3-8) have been used to populate the tables for Q1, Q2 and Qs 3,4 and 5

The submissions are monthly, with bed complements provided for the end of the period reported. Therefore figures requested have been provided monthly and for beds requested for 1st January, figures for the previous day have been given.

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.nhslothian.scot/FOI/Pages/default.aspx>

Yours sincerely

**ALISON MACDONALD**  
**Executive Director, Nursing**  
Cc: Chief Executive