

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – HEALTH VISITORS

I write in response to your request for information in relation to Health Visitors in NHS Lothian

Question:

Can I request the following information for each calendar year from 2019 to 2025 (most recent):

1. The number of health visitor visits that have been cancelled?
2. The number of health visitor visits that have been cancelled due to non clinical capacity reasons?

Answer:

The table below details the number of health visitor visits which have been cancelled, either by the family, or by the service. These are the categories the cancellations are recorded under, so we are not able to be specific about the reasons the service have cancelled each appointment.

The data includes all health visitor activity, not only those under the Universal Pathway.

Cancelled Health Visitor visits, NHS Lothian		
Year	Cancelled by patient / representative	Cancelled by service
2019	272	139
2020	198	106
2021	201	86
2022	419	64
2023	375	68
2024	349	96
2025 (to end April 2025)	90	55

Question:

3. The number of health visitor visits that have been changed from being in person to over the phone instead?

Answer:

This information is not collected centrally. Information may 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:

4. The number of families assigned to each health visitor?

Answer:

233.29 WTE Health Visitors are employed in NHS Lothian, providing a service to 43,794 children aged 5 or younger and not yet at school.

Caseload size is determined using a caseload weighting tool which takes into account a range of factors over and above the numbers of children. The number of children assigned to a health visitor varies throughout the year. The number will be highest just before the start of the school year and lowest after a new school year starts.

Question:

5. The percentage of children who have received all 11 of the policy assigned visits as part of the Universal Health Visiting Pathway?

Answer:

The table below details the percentage for the number of visits received under the Universal Pathway for children now aged 6 who are eligible to have received all 11 visits. The data includes all children resident in Lothian and only shows Universal Pathway visits which were completed by NHS Lothian. For instance, if some or all visits were completed by another health board before the child moved into Lothian, these visits will not be recorded in our data.

Number of Health Visitor visits received by each child under the Universal Pathway, current 6 year old children, NHS Lothian		
Total number of visits completed	Number of children	Percentage of total
0	383	4%
2	706	8%
3	379	4%
4	333	4%
5	358	4%
6	584	7%

Number of Health Visitor visits received by each child under the Universal Pathway, current 6 year old children, NHS Lothian		
Total number of visits completed	Number of children	Percentage of total
7	970	11%
8	1,220	14%
9	1,432	17%
10	1,275	15%
11	799	9%

Question:

6. The number of families that have not had all 11 home visits due to staffing issues?

Answer:

This information is not collected centrally. Information may 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.

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

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