

Date 02/05/2025  
Your Ref  
Our Ref 9991

Enquiries to Richard Mutch  
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Direct Line 0131 465 5687  
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Dear

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – ASTHMA PATIENTS

I write in response to your request for information in relation to asthma patients.

### Question:

1. What the health board's current estimate is for the number of people living with asthma within its boundary.
2. How and when was this number reached? i.e. using GP data, prescription data, primary and secondary care referrals.

### Answer:

I must advise that we are not required to provide estimates to answer requests under FOI(S)A only factually accurate recorded information. To answer this we would have to extract from all the sources you have mentioned, however even if we did this the information would not be accurate as it would include a high level of duplication. It is also the case prescribing data only show the containers issued.

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 asthma patients 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 sorry I cannot help 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

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*

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

Yours sincerely

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