

Date 05/06/2025
Your Ref
Our Ref 10074

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

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION - FORMALDEHYDE LEVELS

I write in response to your request for information in relation to formaldehyde levels.

Question:

- How often and/or under what circumstances are formaldehyde levels measured in your histopathology department?

Answer:

- In formaldehyde areas levels are meant to be measured monthly in areas where formalin is routinely used.
- Face masks with formalin filters are present in the dept for wearing when taking formalin measurements.
- There can be ad hoc measurements if colleagues smell formalin; these may not be recorded.
- Formalin readings are observed/taken in any spill event.
- Formalin readings are **observed**/taken when venting class 3 safety cabinets are vented after fumigation.

Question:

- Exactly how many times have formaldehyde levels been measured in your histopathology department over the last 12 months?

Answer:

There should have been 76 readings but 50 were taken.

Question:

- Exactly how many times were formaldehyde levels recorded as being between 0 and less than or equal to 0.3ppm in the last 12 months?

Answer:

On 34 occasions.

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*

Question:

- In order for me to gauge the approximate size of the histopathology dept, can you advise the approximate number of cases that pass through the histopathology dept annually?

Answer:

Around 57,000 or more requests per annum.

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