

Date 30/06/2025
Your Ref
Our Ref 10179

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

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – CERVICAL SMEAR

I write in response to your request for information in relation to cervical smear tests.

Question:

- My request is for the number of time, in weeks or any other length of time available, that patients are waiting for a follow-up appointment following a cervical smear test in NHS Lothian.

By follow-up test, I mean for those who have been referred for further testing following findings from routine testing, such as for a colposcopy.

I am looking for the number of weeks from the date of testing, or from the date of results being sent to patients. If both are available, then please can I have both numbers.

I am looking for data available in the time period of the past year. If this is not available, please provide data for the past six months.

Answer:

Following a positive cervical screening test, the timescales for review, in accordance with Health Improvement Scotland (HIS) guidelines are 2 weeks for Urgent Suspicion of Cancer (USOC), 4 weeks for urgent referrals and 8 weeks for routine referrals. Urgency of referral is determined by criteria based on testing positive for Human Papillomavirus (HPV) and cytology results (cells collected from the cervix and assessed under a microscope for abnormal or potentially pre-cancerous changes).

In Lothian, someone requiring a follow up appointment and depending on their results, is added to either the new ROUTINE or new URGENT colposcopy patient waiting list.

Between May 2024-May 2025, the average waiting times for colposcopy were:

- new URGENT patient waiting list = 2 weeks
- new ROUTINE patient waiting list = 35-40 weeks

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*

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