

Date 14/07/2025
Your Ref
Our Ref 10259

Enquiries to Richard Mutch
Extension 35687
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richard.mutch@nhs.scot

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – PATIENT TRANSFER

I write in response to your request for information in relation to psychiatric in-patients transferred outwith Lothian.

Question:

- Under FOI, please provide the following figures for financial years 2021/22, 2022/23, 2023/24, 2024/25, and 2025/26 to date – broken down by financial year:
- Number of instances where psychiatric in-patients were placed in, or transferred to, an inpatient psychiatric hospital, ward, unit, or other similar inpatient psychiatric institution outside of area – for example to another NHS trust, or to a private hospital outside of area.
 - A breakdown of the areas they were sent to, and how many were sent to each area. Please use which ever category you have available to identify the area.
 - Please also provide a breakdown of the reasons for transfer to another location – e.g not enough beds in your NHS trust, specialist care unavailable in your NHS trust etc.

Answer:

Please find enclosed HealthCare Governance Committee Paper.

During the years requested, there were 11 new transfers made outwith Lothian. Reasons recorded Mental Health admission for rehabilitation or for other type of psychiatric admission.

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

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

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
Enc.

Meeting: Healthcare Governance Committee
Meeting date: 28 January 2025
Title: Monitoring Out of Area Group (MOOAG) Annual Report
Responsible Executive: Service Director
Report Author: Finance Manager

1 Purpose

This report is presented for:

Assurance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Discussion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Awareness	<input type="checkbox"/>

This report relates to:

Annual Delivery Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Local policy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emerging issue	<input type="checkbox"/>	NHS / IJB Strategy or Direction	<input type="checkbox"/>
Government policy or directive	<input type="checkbox"/>	Performance / service delivery	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legal requirement	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other [please describe]	<input type="checkbox"/>

This report relates to the following LSDF Strategic Pillars and/or Parameters:

Improving Population Health	<input type="checkbox"/>	Scheduled Care	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children & Young People	<input type="checkbox"/>	Finance (revenue or capital)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mental Health, Illness & Wellbeing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Workforce (supply or wellbeing)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Primary Care	<input type="checkbox"/>	Digital	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unscheduled Care	<input type="checkbox"/>	Environmental Sustainability	<input type="checkbox"/>

This aligns to the following NHS Scotland quality ambition(s):

Safe	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Effective	<input type="checkbox"/>
Person-Centred	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Any member wishing additional information should contact the Responsible Executive (named above) in advance of the meeting.

2 Report summary

2.1 Situation

To present the annual update from the Monitoring Out of Area Group (MOOAG).

The committee is recommended to accept moderate assurance that MOOAG and the independent sector partners have comprehensive systems in place to deliver safe, effective and person - centred care.

2.2 Background

Scope of Services

MOOAG is made up of senior operational managers, clinicians and senior managers with commissioning responsibility to agree and review the appropriateness of all out of area placements for mental health and learning disabilities patients.

Due to the lack of low secure provision in NHS Lothian, MOOAG contracts a block booking for low secure mental health beds with two independent sector providers, Shaw Healthcare and The Priory Group. The previous block contracts finished June 2024 and new contracts were agreed with both providers and will be in place until 31 March 2027. This guarantees access to 15 low secure mental health beds with ability to flex capacity upwards or downwards depending on bed availability within both units.

2.3 Assessment

Structures and Processes for Management and Oversight of Safety

Management and governance structures

MOOAG met six times during 2023/24. The group oversees NHS Lothian mental health and learning disabilities patients who are being treated out of area. The group also considers applications for new out of area referrals and is responsible for financial oversight of out of area placements.

Management and governance processes

At each meeting MOOAG considers new applications from clinicians who wish to refer a patient out with Lothian for a specialist placement. All applications are required to have been endorsed by the management team of the referring clinician. Existing placements for patients who are currently placed out of area are reviewed on a rolling basis at each meeting with the Lothian link clinician updating the group. Forecast expenditure against the £6.6m MOOAG budget is also presented at each meeting to ensure the group are apprised of the impact on the budget of any decisions that are being considered.

Healthcare Inspectorate reports for out of area providers are considered by MOOAG with Lothian link clinicians required to report any concerns about clinical practice and the suitability, or otherwise of the placement.

The number of out of area placements decreased by two in 2023/24 compared to the previous year. However, due to the previous block contracts (16 beds), we continued to pay for an empty bed in the Ayr Clinic for most of the year.

The Mental Welfare Commission noted that NHS Lothian was one of the few systems that had a robust mechanism of oversight for out of area placements.

Development of Local Provision

Following the Scottish Budget on 19 December 2023 all NHS Boards were instructed to stop any project development spend. Given the challenging financial environment the Scottish Government do not anticipate starting any new projects for at least the next two years. The initial agreements will remain on hold for the medium term. If the Mental Health Rehabilitation case was progress to completion it would allow all but one individual currently placed out of area to return to Lothian.

2.3.1 Financial

Table 1 below shows the cost of out of area placements only across the last three financial years. These figures **exclude** the cost of assessments and emergency out of area admissions which are also overseen by MOOAG and are charged to the out of area budget.

	2021/22		2022/23		2023/24	
	No of patients	£m	No of patients	£m	No of patients	£m
Mental Health	25	5.3	26	5.7	25*	5.6
Learning Disability		0.2		0.2		0.2
Totals		5.4		5.9		5.8

Table 1: out of area placement costs (excludes emergency and assessment costs)

* This included a void bed within the Ayr Clinic block contract.

The number of patients shown are the total number of patients who were placed out of area across the financial year. Most placements were for treatment not currently available in NHS Lothian, primarily low secure mental health.

The overall MOOAG budget was underspent by £0.9m in 2023/24, the budget position in table 2 below **includes** all emergency out of area admissions as well as assessment costs.

	2023/24 £m
Budget	6.6
Expenditure	5.6
Under/(Overspend)	0.9

Table 2: Year End MOOAG budget 2023/24

2.3.2 Risk Assessment/Management

Demand for low secure mental health provision increases.

Impact of the current economic conditions resulting in significantly increased costs for out of area placements.

The lack of available capital funding for the next 5-10 years preventing local provision of low secure mental health beds.

2.3.3 Equality and Diversity, including health inequalities

This is an update report and therefore no impact assessment is required.

2.3.4 Other impacts

Not applicable.

2.3.5 Communication, involvement, engagement, and consultation

MOOAG does not include patient representation given the need to protect patient confidentiality and the sensitive nature of the small number of cases that are overseen by the group.

2.4 Recommendation

- **Assurance** – The Board/Committee is asked to agree and accept a significant assurance level.

2 List of appendices

The following appendices are included with this report:

- Appendix 1, External Placement Providers 2023/24
- Appendix 2, MOOAG membership 2023/24

Appendix 1

External Placement Providers 2023/24

Unit	Organisation
Aberbeeg Hospital, Aberbeeg	Elysium Healthcare
Ayr Clinic Priory, Ayr	Priory Group
Cygnets Hospital, Bury	Cygnets Health Care
Cygnets Hospital, Clifton	Cygnets Health Care
Cygnets Hospital, Maidstone	Cygnets Health Care
Cygnets Wallace Hospital, Dundee	Cygnets Health Care
Kemple View Priory, Blackburn	Priory Group
Roseberry Park Hospital, Middlesbrough	Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust
St Magnus Hospital, Haslemere	St Magnus House
St Mary's Hospital, Warrington	Elysium Healthcare
Surehaven, Glasgow	Shaw Healthcare

Appendix 2

MOOAG membership List 2023/24

Tracey Mckigen	Services Director, REAS (Chair)
Dr Andrew Watson	Associate Medical Director, REAS
Hamish Hamilton	Chief Finance Officer, West Lothian HSCP
Jacquie Balkan	General Manager, REAS
Angela Dixon	General Manager, REAS
Dr Jo Brown	Clinical Director, Consultant Forensic Psychiatrist
Dr Ganesan Rajagopal	Clinical Director, Learning Disabilities, REAS
	Mental Health Operational Lead, Edinburgh HSCP
Guy Whitehead	General Manager, East Lothian HSCP
Mike Reid	General Manager, West Lothian HSCP
Karen Darroch	Service Manager, Midlothian HSCP
	MOOAG Administrator
	Finance Manager