

Date 11/07/2025
Your Ref
Our Ref 10263

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

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – OUTWITH AREA

I write in response to your request for information in relation to expenditure on patients sent outwith NHS Lothian.

Question:

- I wish to make a Freedom of Information Request for the cost in 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 & 2025 to the present date of the amount spent on Hotels & B&Bs for overnight accommodation for patients. With a breakdown of each year.
 - Clarification of the question: “How much NHS Lothian spends sending patients out with Lothian for specialist health care and within NHS Lothian.”

Answer:

The following data covers the amount NHS Lothian spends on travel and accommodation to support Lothian patients/companions who are referred out-of-area (out of Lothian) for specialised and highly specialised healthcare. Referrals are either to other NHS Boards in Scotland which host nationally designated services, or to NHS hospitals in England for highly specialised healthcare which is not provided in NHS Scotland. Costs for travel and accommodation cannot be disaggregated. Companions are funded where medically necessary.

Please note the reduced spend during years 2020-22 reflects the fact that many referrals to England ceased during the COVID-19 pandemic.

NHS Lothian does not fund travel/accommodation for patients from elsewhere coming into Lothian for treatment. These costs would be met by the patients' NHS Health Board of residence i.e. the health board where the patient lives.

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

NHS Lothian spend on travel and accommodation to support Lothian patients/companions who are referred out-of-area.

Year	Spend
2020/21	£19,000
2021/22	£46,000
2022/23	£83,000
2023/24	£99,000
2024/25	£142,000
2025/26 (to end of May 2025)	£8,000

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