

Date 17/07/2025
Your Ref
Our Ref 10266

Enquiries to Richard Mutch
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Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – INFECTION RATES

I write in response to your request for information in relation to infection rates.

Question:

- Could I please request infection rates by hospital for orthopaedics and colorectal surgery and could I have the SSI and HAI rates for the hospitals

Answer:

I am advised we are unable to provide a meaningful response to the questions:

- “*infection rates by hospital for orthopaedics and colorectal surgery*” – as this lacks specificity about which type of infections (for example wound, respiratory, urinary infections) for or over which time period data is being requested.
- “*SSI and HAI rates for the hospitals*” – see note above.

NHS Lothian do not carry out formal surveillance of surgical site infection for all surgeries in all hospitals and are not required to do so.

Mandatory surveillance reporting of hip arthroplasty surgical site infection, and major colorectal surgery surgical site infection was paused at the start of the COVID pandemic in 2020 and has not yet restarted.

The Scottish Government are currently considering a proposal from Antimicrobial Resistance and Healthcare Associated Infection (ARHAI) national expert advisors on the future requirements for mandatory HAI and SSI surveillance programmes and instruction on this is anticipated by NHS Lothian in late Autumn/early Winter this year.

More information on data and intelligence on HAI and SSI can be found here: [Data and Intelligence | National Services Scotland](#)

The ARHAI annual report (found here: [ARHAI Annual Report 2023-2024](#)) provides some more information on historic and current surveillance and performance. The annual report for 2024-2025 is not yet published.

Headquarters
Mainpoint
102 West Port
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Chair Professor John Connaghan CBE
Chief Executive Professor Caroline Hiscox
Lothian NHS Board is the common name of Lothian Health Board

This information is exempt under **Section 25** of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 - Information otherwise accessible

(1) Information which the applicant can reasonably obtain other than by requesting it under section 1(1) is exempt information.

I am sorry I cannot help further 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