

Date 18/08/2025
Your Ref
Our Ref 10332

Enquiries to Richard Mutch
Extension 35687
Direct Line 0131 465 5687
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Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – DELAYED DISCHARGE

I write in response to your request for information in relation to delayed discharge.

Question:

1. Number of mental health patients experiencing delayed discharge:
Please provide the total number of mental health inpatients who experienced delayed discharge in your health board area for each of the last two calendar years (or financial years), broken down by year.

Answer:

- 1a. Total number of mental health inpatients experiencing a delayed discharge by calendar year

2023	300
2024	279

- 1b. Total number of discharged mental health inpatients who experienced a delayed discharge by discharge year

2023	250
2024:	213

Question:

2. Length of delayed discharge: Please provide the average and longest number of days patients remained in hospital in your health board area after being medically fit for discharge, for each year.

Answer:

2023:	30 days
2024:	37 days

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:

3. Main reasons for delayed discharge: Please provide a breakdown of the primary reasons for delayed discharges among mental health patients (housing issues, lack of social care support, etc.) for each year.

Answer:

Reason for delay	Discharge year	
	2023	2024
25D Awaiting completion of arrangements - in order to live in their own home - awaiting social support	50	43
24F Awaiting place availability in care home (EMI/Dementia bed required)	38	44
24C Awaiting place availability in Nursing Home	37	43
25F Awaiting completion of arrangements - Re-housing provision (including sheltered housing and homeless patients)	24	21
25E Awaiting completion of arrangements - in order to live in their own home - awaiting procurement/delivery of equipment/adaptions fitted	28	9

Question:

4. Age and diagnosis categories: If available, please provide data broken down by age groups (under 18, 18–65, over 65) and primary mental health diagnosis category.

Answer:

4a. Number of discharged mental health patients experiencing a delayed discharge by age and discharge year		
Age group	Discharge year	
	2023	2024
18-65 years	92	64
Over 65 years	158	149
4b. Number of discharged mental health patients experiencing a delayed discharge by discharge diagnosis and discharge year		
Discharge diagnosis	Discharge year	
	2023	2024
F009 Dementia in Alzheimer disease, unspecified	32	42
F002 Dementia in Alzheimer disease, atypical or mixed type	27	27
F209 Schizophrenia, unspecified	26	20
F019 Vascular dementia, unspecified	10	14
F03X Unspecified dementia	13	8

Question:

5. Costs associated with delayed discharges: If possible, please provide estimates of the financial cost of delayed discharges for mental health patients for each of the last two years.

Answer:

This level of detail is not held in a centrally extractable format. Under the Freedom of Information Act NHS Lothian is not required to create new records to enable it to respond to your enquiry. This information is not collated or held in aggregate form and it would be necessary to review all case files relating to patients, finance ledgers and delayed discharges over the period you have requested to assemble the information you seek. Even if NHS Lothian did this – and there would be significant cost implications in doing so – it would be unable to respond in full to your request. The information requested is therefore exempt under section 12.1 – Cost.

We do not calculate a cost for delayed discharges, cost per day is in the Cost Book but this is just a standard rate across all patients with nothing different for delays.

[Costs Book publication - Costs Book - Finance within the NHS - System monitoring, accountability and quality of care - Healthcare system - Public Health Scotland](#)

Notes:-

1. Includes patients under the care of Adult Mental Health West Lothian Psychiatry, AMH Adult Mental Health, AMH Regional Eating Disorders Unit, CAMHS Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Community Rehabilitation Team (Mental Health), Forensic Psychiatry, Older People's Mental Health WL - Psychiatry, Psychiatry of old age, or the Robert Fergusson Unit
2. Question 1a includes any patients with a delayed discharge at any point in that calendar year. For all subsequent questions, the answers include patients discharged in the year specified who experienced a delayed discharge at any point during their admission.
3. Patients may experience more than one delay during an inpatient stay. Reason for delayed discharge counts include the last reason for delay for each patient.
4. Length of delay is calculated as the total time a patient spent in delay during an 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 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