

Date 11/08/2025
Your Ref
Our Ref 10333

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

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – LOCUM DOCTORS

I write in response to your request for information in relation to locum doctors.

Question:

1. Please provide the total amount spent on locum Doctors across all departments. for 2025 YTD and 2024

Answer:

	2024/25	2025/26 YTD M3
Bank & LUCS	15,830,139	3,950,178
Agency	2,297,766	511,491
Total	18,127,906	4,461,669

Question:

2. Can you break down the percentage spent on bank/locum Doctor spend on the last year (2024) to the most recent records you have, compared to the year before (2023)?

Answer:

	23/24		24/25	
	Costs £	% of Total	Costs £	% of Total
Total Medical Permanent	359,672,801	95%	403,776,227	96%
Total Bank & LUCS	16,349,811	4%	15,830,139	4%
Total Agency Costs	3,802,497	1%	2,297,766	1%
Total Medical & Spend	379,825,109	100%	421,904,133	100%

Question:

3. How many Doctor vacancies do you currently have within the Trust that have been vacant for over 6 months?

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

Answer:

This information is not held in a centrally extractable format. Recruitment only know about a gap/vacancy when we receive a Recruitment Authorisation Form to begin the recruitment process to fill it.

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 vacancies 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.

Question:

4. Do you have any cost-saving measures in place?

Answer:

Internal Direct Engagement model for all medical locum agency shifts.

Question:

5. Locum-to-permanent ratio: How many locum doctors are currently employed versus permanent doctor staff, and what is the rationale for using locums instead of permanent?

Answer:

Substantive	2,708 WTE
Bank Locum	67 WTE
Agency Locum	11.4 WTE
The ratio of permanent to locum is 34.5 permanent WTE to every 1 locum WTE.	

Permanent Staffing - this would be a to take data from Turas [NHS Scotland workforce | Turas Data Intelligence](#). Instructions below:

- Go to the employment over time report on the left side
- Select board – NHS Lothian
- Select job family – Medical and Dental
- (Select band/grade)
- Select contract type - Permanent
- Select WTE/Headcount

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.

Question:

6. Please share which departments have the highest locum doctor spend due to them not being able to fill hard-to-fill roles?

Answer:

Mental Health Services and Oral and Maxillofacial

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