

Date 14/08/2025  
Your Ref  
Our Ref 10367

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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. A breakdown of the number for the financial years 2022/23 and 2023/24 (most recent);
2. How long each patient had been classified as a delayed discharge;
3. The hospital in which the patient was delayed and the cause of death;
4. Reason for delayed discharge;

### Answer:

Please see enclosed spreadsheet.

To protect the identity of the individuals involved any figure of 5 or less has not been shown in the enclosed spreadsheet. Since we do not have their consent to release this data from their records, the information is exempt under section 38(1)(b) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act i.e. to provide it would breach the Data Protection Act (2018). For the same reason cause of death cannot be provided.

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](http://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.

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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*



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

FOI: 10367 - Delayed Discharge Deaths

**Request:**

I am looking for information regarding the number of patients who have died whilst classified as a delayed discharge (a patient, clinically ready for discharge, cannot leave hospital because the other necessary care, support or accommodation for them is not readily accessible and/or funding is not available).  
As such, can I request the following:  
1. A breakdown of the number for the financial years 2022/23 and 2023/24 (most recent);  
2. How long each patient had been classified as a delayed discharge;  
3) The hospital in which the patient was delayed and the cause of death;  
4) Reason for delayed discharge;

Date Extracted: 1821/07/2025

Source: NHS Lothian TRAK

*\*Please note that this analysis comes from a LIVE System - if this analysis were to be re-run at a later date the figures may be subject to change.*

**Notes:**

1. Delays are for codes: 11A-B,23C-D, 24A-F, 25A, 25D, 25E-F, 27A, 44, 51, 52, 61, 67, 71, 72, 73, 74, All 9 codes  
2. Median time in delay is provided - individual delays cannot be provided for patient confidentiality reasons. Time in delay is calculated by summing all relevant delay periods during the admission.  
3. Cause of death cannot be provided because the small numbers involved would breach patient confidentiality.  
4. Where date of death is not available then discharge date is used as a proxy. Likewise discharge hospital is used where place of death is not available.  
4. Delays which ended on or 'after' death datetime are included as being in delay on death. Delays which ended before death datetime are not included.

**Response:**

**Table 1 - Number of patients who died while in delay and LOS in delay, by financial year of death**

Year	No. of Patients	Median Time in delay during admission - days
2022/23	60	18.6
2023/24	37	14.3
2024/25	43	18.2

**Table 2 - Number of patients who died while in delay by hospital**

Year	Hospital			
	RIE	SJH	WGH	Other
2022/23	23	8	20	9
2023/24	11	8	7	11
2024/25	15	10	9	9

**Table 3 - Number of patients who died while in delay and final reason for delay**

Year	Reason for Delay				
	9	11B	24C	25D	Other
2022/23	13	13	11	14	9
2023/24	8	8	10	6	5<
2024/25	5<	8	14	6	10