

Dear

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – CONSULTANT POSTS

I write in response to your request for information in relation to consultant posts in NHS Lothian.

### Question:

1. As at 30 September 2025, what is the number of medical consultant posts (*all consultants regardless of specialty including NHS and honorary*) in your board by WTE for the following (please note that all posts should be counted under ONE category only):

a) posts occupied by a permanent consultant

### Answer:

This information is published on the TURAS website and is available at the following link:  
<https://turasdata.nes.nhs.scot/data-and-reports/official-workforce-statistics/all-official-statistics-publications/02-september-2025-workforce/dashboards/nhs-scotland-workforce/?pageid=14644>

To get in post data, select 'employment over time' in reports tab on left hand side. Fill in:

- NHS Board - select NHS Lothian Board
- Job family – select Medical & Dental.
- Band/Grade – select Consultant
- Contract Type - select Permanent

### Question:

b) newly created posts which have not yet been advertised

### Answer:

This information is not collected centrally. Each department is responsible for their own posts. Information may be held in individual department records, but in order to provide the information you request it would be necessary to collate information from each department record, requiring significant resources. Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, NHS Lothian is not required to respond to your request if the resources required to do so equate to more than £600 in cost.

### Question:

c) vacant posts according to the ISD definition (“a post which has been cleared for advert after being through the redeployment process (internal or external advert) and remains a vacancy until an individual starts in the post”)

Answer:

On 30 September 2025 there were 66 vacant posts, including locum consultant posts.

Question:

d) vacant posts which are awaiting approval for recruitment

Answer:

7 consultant posts were on the central vacancy panel approval list at the panel on 23 September 2025.

Question:

e) posts which although currently unfilled are not under active recruitment, e.g. where a previous recruitment exercise has been unsuccessful

Answer:

This information is not collected centrally. Each department is responsible for processing their own vacant posts. Information may be held in individual department records, but in order to provide the information you request it would be necessary to collate information from each department record, requiring significant resources. Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, NHS Lothian is not required to respond to your request if the resources required to do so equate to more than £600 in cost.

Question:

f) all posts occupied by a locum consultant (including consultants re-engaged as locums who previously held a permanent post and those locum consultants employed via an agency)

Answer:

Between 30 September and 27 November 2025 59 bank locum consultants have worked locum shifts on an ad-hoc basis, coming to a total of 8 WTE. A further 7 agency locum consultants have worked, coming to 2.5 WTE. The overall total is therefore 10.5 WTE.

Question:

g) posts that have been recruited to but applicant not yet in post (e.g. deferred start due to pending CCT)

Answer:

Fewer than five posts. I am not able to release numbers of 5 or fewer, as this information could lead to the identification of the individuals involved. Since we do not have their

consent to release their personal data, the information is exempt under section 38 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 as to provide it would breach the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018.

Question:

h) The number of consultants that are on fixed term contracts

Answer:

This information is published on the TURAS website and is available at the following link:  
<https://turasdata.nes.nhs.scot/data-and-reports/official-workforce-statistics/all-official-statistics-publications/02-september-2025-workforce/dashboards/nhs-scotland-workforce/?pageid=14644>

To get in post data, select 'employment over time' in reports tab on left hand side. Fill in:

- NHS Board - select NHS Lothian Board
- Job family – select Medical & Dental.
- Band/Grade – select Consultant
- Contract Type - select Fixed Term

Question:

i) other (please be specific)

Answer:

No other information on consultant posts is collected centrally. Each department is responsible for their own posts. Information may be held in individual department records, but in order to provide the information you request it would be necessary to collate information from each department record, requiring significant resources. Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, NHS Lothian is not required to respond to your request if the resources required to do so equate to more than £600 in cost.

Question:

2. As of 30 September 2025, how many of the posts listed under c) to h) above have not been occupied by a permanent substantive post holder since 31 March 2025?

Answer:

This information is not collected centrally. Each department is responsible for processing their own vacant posts. Information may be held in individual department records, but in order to provide the information you request it would be necessary to collate information from each department record, requiring significant resources. Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, NHS Lothian is not required to respond to your request if the resources required to do so equate to more than £600 in cost.

Question:

3. As of 30 September 2025, what is the number of SAS (Specialty doctors, Specialists, Associate Specialists or staff grades) doctors in your board by WTE for the following (please note that all posts should be counted under ONE category only):

a) posts occupied by a permanent SAS doctor

Answer:

This information is published on the TURAS website and is available at the following link:  
<https://turasdata.nes.nhs.scot/data-and-reports/official-workforce-statistics/all-official-statistics-publications/02-september-2025-workforce/dashboards/nhs-scotland-workforce/?pageid=14644>

To get in post data, select 'employment over time' in reports tab on left hand side. Fill in:

- NHS Board - select NHS Lothian Board
- Job family – select Medical & Dental.
- Band/Grade – select Staff & Associate Specialist Grades
- Contract Type - select Permanent

Question:

b) newly created posts which have not yet been advertised (including new Specialist posts)

Answer:

This information is not collected centrally. Each department is responsible for their own posts. Information may be held in individual department records, but in order to provide the information you request it would be necessary to collate information from each department record, requiring significant resources. Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, NHS Lothian is not required to respond to your request if the resources required to do so equate to more than £600 in cost.

Question:

c) vacant posts according to the definition "a post which has been cleared for advert after being through the redeployment process (internal or external advert) and remains a vacancy until an individual starts in the post"

Answer:

On 30 September 2025 there were 25 vacant posts.

Question:

d) vacant posts which are awaiting approval for recruitment

e) posts which although currently unfilled are not under active recruitment, e.g. where a previous recruitment exercise has been unsuccessful

Answer:

This information is not collected centrally. Each department is responsible for processing their own vacant posts. Information may be held in individual department records, but in order to provide the information you request it would be necessary to collate information from each department record, requiring significant resources. Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, NHS Lothian is not required to respond to your request if the resources required to do so equate to more than £600 in cost.

Question:

f) all posts occupied by a locum SAS doctor (including those locum specialty doctors employed via an agency)

Answer:

Between 30 September and 27 November 2025 17 bank locum SAS doctors have worked a mix of block bookings and ad-hoc hours, coming to a total of 5.4 WTE. A further 4 agency locum SAS doctors have worked, coming to 2.2 WTE. The overall total is therefore 7.6 WTE.

Question:

g) posts that have been recruited to but applicant not yet in post

Answer:

Fewer than five posts. I am not able to release numbers of 5 or fewer, as this information could lead to the identification of the individuals involved. Since we do not have their consent to release their personal data, the information is exempt under section 38 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 as to provide it would breach the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018.

Question:

h) The number of SAS doctors on fixed term contracts

Answer:

This information is published on the TURAS website and is available at the following link: <https://turasdata.nes.nhs.scot/data-and-reports/official-workforce-statistics/all-official-statistics-publications/02-september-2025-workforce/dashboards/nhs-scotland-workforce/?pageid=14644>

To get in post data, select 'employment over time' in reports tab on left hand side. Fill in:

- NHS Board - select NHS Lothian Board
- Job family – select Medical & Dental.
- Band/Grade – select Staff & Associate Specialist Grades

- Contract Type - select Permanent

Question:

i) other (please be specific)

Answer:

No other information on consultant posts is collected centrally. Each department is responsible for their own posts. Information may be held in individual department records, but in order to provide the information you request it would be necessary to collate information from each department record, requiring significant resources. Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, NHS Lothian is not required to respond to your request if the resources required to do so equate to more than £600 in cost.

Question:

4. As of 30 September 2025, how many of the posts listed under c) – h) above have not been occupied by a permanent substantive post holder since 31 March 2025?

Answer:

This information is not collected centrally. Each department is responsible for processing their own vacant posts. Information may be held in individual department records, but in order to provide the information you request it would be necessary to collate information from each department record, requiring significant resources. Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, NHS Lothian is not required to respond to your request if the resources required to do so equate to more than £600 in cost.

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 <https://www.foi.scot/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 reviewer at the address at the top 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.nhslothian.scot/FOI>

Yours sincerely

**ALISON MACDONALD**  
**Executive Director of Nursing Midwifery and AHPs**  
Cc: Chief Executive