

Date 27/11/2025
Your Ref
Our Ref 10781

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

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – CANCELLATIONS

I write in response to your request for information in relation to appointment cancellations

Question:

- Please tell me how many a) operations and b) appointments have been cancelled due to bad weather or broken heating in a) 2020-21, b) 2021-22, c) 2022-23, d) 2023-24, e) 2024-25.
- If you are unable to provide this information please provide a breakdown of reasons for a) operations and b) appointments being cancelled.

Answer:

Short-notice New Patient Outpatient Cancellations

Cancel Reason	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
COVID-19 Cancellation	1832	1646	288	0	0
Cancelled By Service	9144	12848	15287	15277	16580
Could Not Attend	13563	22036	27491	30162	28757
Industrial Action	5<	0	5<	7	5<
Patient Died	63	60	58	59	51
Patient attended clinic but could not wait (reasonable delay)	45	71	81	88	79

1. We do not record either bad weather or broken heating as reasons for cancellations.
2. It is assumed that the requester is interested in short-notice cancellations, that is, within 24 hours of the appointment.
3. PHS publishes data on short-notice cancellations of operations across Scotland - see the following link: <https://publichealthscotland.scot/publications/show-all-releases?id=20546>
4. It is further assumed that the requested is interested in "New Patient" outpatient appointments. These are summarised by financial year in the table below.
5. In this analysis, a short-notice cancellation refers to an New Outpatient appointment that was recorded as cancelled less than 24 hours before the booked appointment time. This also includes appointments that were recorded in Trak as cancelled up to 24 hours after the booked appointment time.

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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

To protect the identity of the individuals involved any figure of 5 or less has not been shown in the table above. 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).

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