

Date 04/12/2025
Your Ref
Our Ref 10804

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

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – METHADONE PRESCRIBING

I write in response to your request for information in relation to methadine prescribing.

Question:

- The number of people currently being prescribed methadone by the NHS as of 5 November 2025.

Answer:

The number of individual patients with a prescription for methadone in August 2025 was 1970.

Question:

- The number of people who were being prescribed methadone on 5 November in each of the years 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024. For example, X many people were being prescribed methadone on 5 November 2024, etc. If this is not possible, please instead provide it for the calendar year overall.

Answer:

Calendar Year	Number of patients
2021	3996
2022	3724
2023	3480
2024	3176

Question:

- The cost to the NHS of prescribing methadone in each calendar year 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025 to 5 November 2025.

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:

Calendar Year	Sum of Claim PD Paid GIC excl. BB
2021	£719,926.93
2022	£663,281.09
2023	£753,256.08
2024	£622,172.43
2025	£352,622.41

1. The data available includes prescribing activity from January 2021 to August 2025 in NHS Lothian.
2. Data captured from paid items. Paid items best reflect the activity associated with prescribing and the supply of medicines to patients in NHS Lothian. This report provides information on individual items for which the dispenser has been reimbursed.
3. Data shown are based on prescriptions dispensed by community pharmacists, appliance suppliers and dispensing doctors only, and therefore does not take into account medicines dispensed by hospitals or hospital based clinics.
4. The medications included are those with VTM Name "METHADONE".
5. The CHI capture rate for these drugs for calendar years 2021 to 2024 is 90.3% which may result in an underrepresentation of the actual patient count.

I hope the information provided helped 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