

Date 02/03/2026
Your Ref
Our Ref 11072

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

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – SLEEP SERVICES

I write in response to your request for information in relation to Sleep Services.

Question:

1. How many referrals have been made to the board's sleep service for suspected sleep apnea in 2024, 2025 and 2026 to date.
2. What was the average waiting time from referral to treatment for sleep apnea in 2024, 2025 and 2026 to date.

Answer:

I am advised that this information is not held in a centrally extractable format. 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 patients 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:

3. How many deaths have been recorded in the health board region with sleep apnea as either a contributing factor or a comorbidity, in each of the last five years, including 2024 to date.

Answer:

Table 1 Number of deaths where ICD-10 code "G473: Sleep apnoea" is listed as a cause of death (not necessarily the leading cause of death).

Year	Number
2022	15
2023	10

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

2024	27
2025*	14
2026 (to date)*	5<

Notes:

1. Counts include the number of deaths of Lothian residents registered with National Records of Scotland where the ICD-10 code "G473: Sleep apnoea" is listed as a cause of death. Note - this is not necessarily the leading cause of death.
2. Data for 2025 and 2026 is provisional. Final data for 2025 will be available in Summer 2026, and final data for 2026 will be available the year after.

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.nhslotian.scot/FOI/Pages/default.aspx>

Yours sincerely

ALISON MACDONALD
Executive Director, Nursing
 Cc: Chief Executive