

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

I write in response to your request for information in relation to private occupation health referrals.

Question:

- I would like to request the total amount of money spent by the NHS Lothian Occupational Health department on referring NHS staff to external private healthcare providers (including but not limited to private hospitals, physiotherapy clinics, and mental health/counselling services). Please exclude costs related to the outsourcing of NHS patient waiting lists; this request is strictly regarding referrals made for NHS staff members via Occupational Health.
- I would like this financial information broken down by the last five complete financial years (e.g., 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23, 2023/24, and 2024/25). For each year, please provide the total cost and, if available within the cost limit, the total number of individual staff referrals associated with this spend.

Answer:

The NHS Lothian Occupational Health and Safety Service does not routinely make referrals to private health care providers for treatment and assessment. The need for this has arisen on a **very limited** number of cases in the past.

Under this the information is as follows:

Activity	Year	Cost	Numbers
Treatment & Assessment	2020	£1,400	5<
Treatment & Assessment	2021	Nil	5<
Treatment & Assessment	2022	Nil	5<
Treatment & Assessment	2023	£1,170	5<
Treatment & Assessment	2024	£3,890	5<
Treatment & Assessment	2025	Nil	5<

To provide staff who work within NHS Lothian Occupational Health and Safety Service, the same access that other NHS Lothian staff have to be able to self refer for counselling, we have

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 Mainpoint
 102 West Port
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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



for many years had arrangements with 1 external provider (for counselling) that Occupational Health and Safety Service staff can access on a confidential basis. Please note our staff are NOT referred to this service.

The cost for the access is:

Year	Cost
2020	£1,734
2021	£1,769.04
2022	£1,769.04
2023	£1,769.04
2024	£1,769.04
2025	£1,769.04

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

Yours sincerely

ALISON MACDONALD
Executive Director, Nursing
Cc: Chief Executive