

Date 18/03/2026
Your Ref
Our Ref 11182

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

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – TRANSLATION

I write in response to your request for information in relation to translation.

Question:

- For the last financial year, what was the total amount spent on translation costs?
- Can you provide a breakdown of these costs by language translated.
- Do you hire any dedicated translators? If so provide details of how many, total salary cost and for what language.

Answer:

Please see enclosed spreadsheet.

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.

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*



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
Enc

All information requested for 2024-25, unless otherwise stated.

Spend, Suppliers & Contracting

1. Total spend on:

- Interpreting
- Translation
- Transcription

Interp & Translate	Bank & Agency	£1,829,528
Other Areas	Bank & Agency	£21,235
Interp & Translate	4896 Acct	£302,943
Grand Total		£2,153,706

2. Who is your current supplier(s) for language services?

Big Word, Just Sign

If multiple suppliers are used, please specify which services each supplier delivers.

Just Sign - BSL

3. Who is your provider for non-spoken language services (e.g., BSL/ISL)?

Just Sign or in house

4. Who is your provider for transcription services (if separate)?

5. Do you employ any in-house interpreters or translators?

6. Contract expiry dates:

- a) Without extensions
- b) With all extensions applied

7. Name, phone number and email address of the **contract manager** for language services.

Jill Shearer

jill.shearer@nhs.scot

8. Name, phone number and email address of the **person responsible for the language services budget**.

Chantelle Willox - General Manager

9. Do you have any **minimum durations** set for interpreting bookings?

Spoken language Interpreters paid for minimum of hour for appointment bookings. BSL is via agency which charges minimum 3 hour and supplies demand not filled by Lothian's 2 fulltime BSL employees. Lothian also make use of VRI BSL interpreting platform, SignVideo which charges by the minute.

If yes, please specify for each service type (spoken, non-spoken, telephone, video).

Activity Data – Latest Full Financial Year

10. Total number of:

Face-to-face interpreting assignments (spoken) + total hours

20190 (24,452 hours)

Face-to-face interpreting assignments (non-spoken) + total hours	1619 assignments (1,531 hours)
Telephone interpreting calls + total minutes	47,326 calls (716,351 hours)
Video interpreting calls (spoken) + total minutes	150 assignments (162 hours)
Video interpreting calls (non-spoken) + total minutes	5 assignments (6 hours)
Document translations + total words translated	7163
Audio transcriptions + total audio duration	0
11. Top 20 highest-volume languages for interpreting/translation.	1. Polish, 2. Arabic, 3. Cantonese, 4. BSL, 5. Ukrainian, 6. Urdu, 7. Romanian, 8. Bengali, 9. Turkish, 10. Mandarin, 11. Spanish, 12. Russian, 13. Bulgarian, 14. Vietnamese, 15. Punjabi, 16. Italian, 17. Portuguese, 18. Hungarian, 19. Farsi, 20. Kurdish Sorani

Performance, Fulfilment & Complaints

12. Fulfilment rate (%) for:	
Face-to-face interpreting	86.64%
Telephone interpreting	70.38% (excl. thebigword)
Video interpreting	89.08%
Document translation	100%
Audio transcription	N/A
13. Number of language service complaints received in the latest full financial year.	
14. Percentage of positive vs negative feedback received regarding language services.	Lothian have circulated a survey link/QR to some units for optional ratings at end of call. This shows an average rating of 2.5 (out of potential 5 stars) for telephone interpreting, versus 4.5 stars for F2F interpreting (the latter includes both spoken languages and BSL).
15. Languages your provider has been unable to source in the last 12 months.	Eritrean, Igbo, Khasi, Oromo, Amharic, Swahili, Telugu, Twi, Rek, Soninke, Tetun, Tigre, Yoruba (applies to bank, excl. thebigword)
16. Have any service credits been applied in the last 12 months? If yes, what performance issues were they linked to?	No

Social Value, Tender Information & Pricing

17. Social value delivered under this contract in the last 12 months.	
18. If tendered, please provide a copy of the winning bidder's tender submission .	
19. Contracted rates for:	
Spoken face-to-face interpreting (hourly)	
Non-spoken face-to-face interpreting (hourly)	
Telephone interpreting (per minute)	
Spoken video interpreting (per minute)	
Non-spoken video interpreting (per minute)	
Document translation (per word)	
Audio transcription (per audio minute)	
20. Has your provider increased their rates in the last 12 months?	

21. What is the Authority's typical route to market for procuring language services?

Assistive Technology (BSL / Deaf Access)

22. Do you have a **VRS (Video Relay Service)** on-demand service in place allowing Deaf BSL users to contact you via video when phoning? NO

23. Do you have a **VRI (Video Remote Interpreting)** on-demand service in place for emergency/unplanned/immediate communication needs for Deaf patients or service users? YES

If yes to either:

Who is the provider? SignVideo

When was the service introduced? 2023

Is it available 24/7? YES

Is there a cost to the Authority? YES

Additional Data for the Most Recent Full Financial Year

24. Total number of spoken language requests. 23,910

25. Total number of non-spoken language requests. 1,696

26. Total spend on spoken vs non-spoken language services.

27. Fulfilment rates for spoken vs non-spoken services. Spoken 85.83%; Non-spoken 95.75%

Final Clarification Request

28. If your provider offers **additional provisions or specialist services** (e.g., ISL, rare languages, emergency response, in-person support, or other enhanced services), please provide details. DeafBlind, via one of our 2 fulltime BSL interpreters.