

Dear

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – FUNERAL DIRECTORS

I write in response to your request for information in relation to bodies and funeral directors.

### Question:

- I am seeking information regarding instances where the wrong person's body was released to families, funeral directors or undertakers.
  - Please tell how many such cases there have been within the health board area since the year 2020.
  - Please provide the relevant hospitals' names, the date of the incidents and the deceased's ages.
  - Please also tell me how many complaints the health board has received regarding these matters over the time period.

### Answer:

I am advised that there have been five or fewer incidents since 2020 and no complaints. Due to the very small numbers and specific nature of your request it is not possible to provide further breakdown.

To protect the identity of the individuals involved any figure of 5 or less has not been shown in this response. 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

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*



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](http://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