

Dear

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – STAFF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

I write in response to your request for information in relation to nursing staff experiencing racial discrimination in NHS Lothian.

### Question:

1. The number of racial discrimination or racial abuse incidents reported by nursing staff in your NHS Board broken down by each full calendar year 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025, from: a) patients; b) patient’s relatives; c) the public; d) in total (from patients, relatives and the public)

### Answer:

To answer this request, we have used data reported under the adverse event category of ‘violence and aggression’ where a contributory factor was ‘racial abuse’, reported by nursing staff. We do not have separate categories for aggression by patients, patient relatives, or public – we use the categories of ‘patient’, ‘staff’ or ‘other’.

I have not released numbers of 5 or fewer in the table, as this information could lead to the identification of the individuals involved. Since we do not have their consent to release their personal data, the information is exempt under section 38 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 as to provide it would breach the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018.

Incidents reported of violence and aggression against nursing staff, with racial abuse as a contributing factor, NHS Lothian				
Category	2022	2023	2024	2025
Other to Staff violence (physical)	0	0	≤5	≤5
Other to Staff aggression (verbal)	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5
Patient to Staff aggression (verbal)	15	22	46	40
Patient to Staff violence (physical)	≤5	9	21	27

### Question:

2. The number of racial discrimination or racial abuse incidents reported by nursing staff from patients, relatives or members of the public in your NHS Board broken down by each full calendar year 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025, by ethnic group of member of nursing

staff. Please categorise the incidents by the main ethnic groups recorded in eESS – African, Asian, Caribbean or Black, White, Mixed or multiple ethnic group, Other ethnic group, Declined, Not Known.

Answer:

This information is not collected centrally. The staff number or eESS number is not recorded as part of the electronic incident record. Information may be held in individual staff records, but in order to provide the information you request it would be necessary to review each record over the period you have specified, requiring significant resources. Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, NHS Lothian is not required to respond to your request if the resources required to do so equate to more than £600 in cost.

Question:

3. What anti-discrimination actions has the Board taken as a result of the data indicating that they have staff that have been racially abused?

Answer:

In 2023, NHS Lothian Board agreed an ambitious 5 year equality and human rights strategy that focuses on delivering positive outcomes under 6 priorities. Equality data, published research about the significant inequalities facing people in Scotland affecting health and employment, and the lived experiences of people who use our services and work for us were taken into account in the development of the strategy. Information about the strategy and the work we are doing is available on our equality and human rights webpages <https://org.nhslothian.scot/equality-human-rights/>.

In particular, information about the anti-discrimination actions taken by NHS Lothian over the last 3 years as part of delivering the strategy is available in our Equality and Human Rights Annual Reports. The annual reports are available to download on the public sector duty reports webpage - <https://org.nhslothian.scot/equality-human-rights/public-sector-equality-duty-reports/> under the section on "Mainstreaming equality."

NHS Lothian also has in place a dedicated programme of training and development for all staff on the prevention and management of violence and aggression in all forms, supported by a dedicated team of specialist educators. We are committed to working with partner organisations to address issues where they arise, and take steps that help to deter and prevent incidents in future.

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 <https://www.foi.scot/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 reviewer at the address at the top 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>

Yours sincerely

**ALISON MACDONALD**  
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Cc: Chief Executive