

Date 01/06/2026
Your Ref
Our Ref 11457

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

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – FOREIGN PAYMENTS

I write in response to your request for information in relation to payments to foreign countries for treatment.

Question:

- To ask how much money your health board has paid to foreign countries for healthcare provided to UK citizens in the following years.

2023
2024
2025

In addition, could this be broken down by the countries which received the payment and, if possible, the nature of the treatment provided.

Answer:

NHS Lothian funds kidney dialysis patients up to a maximum of £3,000 per patient per year to have dialysis in private clinics when travelling abroad on holiday or for work. The total amount NHS Lothian incurred for this purpose during the last three financial years is as follows:

- 2023/24: £37,000
- 2024/25: £39,000
- 2025/26: £23,000

Providing information on the countries travelled to would risk deductive disclosure of confidential information, due to small numbers. 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).

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



There are no other circumstances in which NHS Lothian pays a foreign country for healthcare provided to NHS Lothian UK citizens.

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