

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – STAFF SICKNESS ABSENCE

I write in response to your request for information in relation to staff sickness absence.

Question:

- Please provide figures regarding staff sickness absence within your organization for the most recent complete financial year (e.g., 2024/2025) or calendar year.

Specifically, I require a breakdown cross-referencing the following three criteria:

1. The Staff Pay Band / Grade (e.g., Agenda for Change Bands).
2. The Department / Business Unit / Directorate (e.g., Human Resources, Finance, Operations, Clinical Specialties).
3. The Recorded Reason for Absence (e.g., mental health/stress, musculoskeletal, respiratory).

For each intersection of the criteria above, please provide:

- The total number of staff members who had a recorded sickness absence.
- The total number of working days lost.

Answer:

Please see enclosed spreadsheet.

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

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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*



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
Enc.

Table 1: Hours lost by Sickness Absence Reason & Division

Sickness Absence Reason	Division								
	Acute Services Division	Corporate Services	Directorate Of Primary Care	East Lothian Partnership	Edinburgh Partnership	Facilities	Midlothian Partnership	Reas	West Lothian Hsc Partnership
Anxiety/stress/depression/other psychiatric illnesses	327,076	70,345	18,041	48,636	44,347	102,133	27,901	85,359	33,264
Asthma	2,539	375	21		362	117	229	261	64
Back problems	52,680	4,469	1,580	6,343	5,233	35,112	3,940	7,805	4,449
Benign and malignant tumours, cancers	31,987	10,315	2,826	3,624	4,082	14,095	2,698	6,735	1,017
Blood disorders	1,661	1,143	15	55	1,992	3,718	74	67	38
Burns, poisoning, frostbite, hypothermia	819	80	30		24	330	17	95	23
Chest & respiratory problems	32,792	6,995	2,500	3,320	6,264	12,022	2,612	12,344	2,318
Cold, cough, flu - influenza	150,648	23,669	4,660	13,294	20,340	33,964	10,208	32,067	9,610
Covid-related illness	9,032	1,761	554	570	1,695	2,537	412	1,523	968
Dental & oral problems	8,611	842	93	691	725	2,980	300	1,635	502
Ear, nose, throat (ENT)	21,528	2,850	459	2,245	2,092	5,277	1,264	3,388	1,708
Endocrine/glandular problems	5,513	117		612	961	715	96	394	101
Eye problems	12,223	1,167	187	108	1,318	3,164	384	1,004	1,541
Gastro-intestinal problems	130,152	16,893	4,837	10,529	15,955	29,794	7,163	21,627	12,268
Genitourinary & gynaecological disorders - exclude pregnancy related disorders	44,820	5,965	636	3,977	5,712	6,359	3,219	9,157	2,817
Headache/migraine	32,614	5,813	523	2,990	3,439	4,171	1,774	7,902	1,005
Heart, cardiac & circulatory problems	16,217	2,048	837	3,066	3,664	8,000	1,500	4,535	1,461
Infectious diseases	3,460	1,393	83	405	377	1,378	92	1,070	286
Injury, fracture	73,415	8,970	2,158	6,268	7,873	46,828	4,498	16,847	5,204
Menopause	1,980	111	88	272	325	179	33	701	45
Menstrual Health Related Illness	716	105	21		157	97	40	38	170
Nervous system disorders - exclude headache, migraine	19,130	4,548	846	2,121	2,716	7,752	492	3,500	1,888
Other known causes - not otherwise classified	116,432	32,406	4,379	7,800	36,622	49,406	6,362	23,321	6,046
Other musculoskeletal problems	96,518	10,675	2,369	11,116	17,719	36,386	4,359	15,308	7,889
Pregnancy related disorders	36,458	2,340	801	2,908	4,169	1,836	1,754	2,682	1,191
Skin disorders	5,630	727	917	2,363	644	3,069	369	3,254	1,002
Substance abuse - include alcoholism & drug dependence	1,088				51	118		194	451
Unknown causes/not specified	62,431	7,760	3,504	5,524	9,727	19,610	4,411	11,383	7,178
Violence & Aggression	117					89		36	137

Table 2: No. of Staff Absent by Sickness Absence Reason & Division

Sickness Absence Reason	Division								
	Acute Services Division	Corporate Services	Directorate Of Primary Care	East Lothian Partnership	Edinburgh Partnership	Facilities	Midlothian Partnership	Reas	West Lothian Hsc Partnership
Anxiety/stress/depression/other psychiatric illnesses	1,653	268	81	207	227	432	137	409	165
Asthma	50	13	5<		10	6	5<	8	5<
Back problems	614	82	23	66	85	306	39	116	41
Benign and malignant tumours, cancers	65	23	10	11	12	31	8	16	7
Blood disorders	20	5<	5<	5<	8	15	5<	5<	5<
Burns, poisoning, frostbite, hypothermia	20	5<	5<		5<	7	5<	5<	5<
Chest & respiratory problems	685	142	25	62	122	176	48	137	47
Cold, cough, flu - influenza	5,052	889	198	445	704	957	293	997	361
Covid-related illness	215	42	23	17	47	54	14	41	26
Dental & oral problems	349	54	6	28	37	97	14	63	22
Ear, nose, throat (ENT)	521	89	23	45	77	118	29	113	53
Endocrine/glandular problems	55	5<		5<	16	6	5<	12	5<
Eye problems	191	20	10	6	27	46	7	21	15
Gastro-intestinal problems	4,040	570	156	363	486	880	203	631	342
Genitourinary & gynaecological disorders - exclude pregnancy related disorders	603	75	16	56	73	69	36	109	45
Headache/migraine	1,370	257	44	104	183	185	81	279	78
Heart, cardiac & circulatory problems	158	23	5<	21	27	42	8	30	11
Infectious diseases	81	18	5<	13	10	16	5<	22	7
Injury, fracture	613	82	25	54	70	299	34	144	49
Menopause	25	5<	5<	5<	9	5<	5<	11	5<
Menstrual Health Related Illness	45	5<	5<		7	8	5<	5<	5<
Nervous system disorders - exclude headache, migraine	101	26	5<	19	19	34	6	30	10
Other known causes - not otherwise classified	1,416	345	51	87	398	481	79	326	108
Other musculoskeletal problems	783	89	23	66	116	279	45	159	52
Pregnancy related disorders	357	28	10	28	48	19	22	43	18
Skin disorders	141	12	8	14	18	30	5<	28	10
Substance abuse - include alcoholism & drug dependence	6				5<	5<		<5	<5
Unknown causes/not specified	1,611	178	106	151	221	397	73	373	114
Violence & Aggression	6					5<		5<	5<

Table 3: Hours Lost by Sickness Absence Reason and Grade

Sickness Absence Reason	Grade									
	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Band 5	Band 6	Band 7	Band 8+	Senior Managers	Medical
Anxiety/stress/depression/other psychiatric illnesses	1,278	129,973	179,000	63,416	181,180	113,508	54,177	10,446	122	24,002
Asthma		263	1,750	670	557	279	382	41		24
Back problems	429	33,351	36,458	8,387	23,721	12,526	3,535	1,504	8	1,691
Benign and malignant tumours, cancers		14,719	19,539	2,409	15,911	12,650	4,925	1,068		6,159
Blood disorders		1,540	1,218	30	3,301	2,090	516	68		
Burns, poisoning, frostbite, hypothermia		364	598	52	163	172	30			40
Chest & respiratory problems	250	15,366	23,747	7,836	16,528	8,491	4,121	2,121		2,706
Cold, cough, flu - influenza	277	38,896	62,573	23,344	82,042	49,033	25,513	6,448		10,272
Covid-related illness		2,396	4,465	1,843	3,911	3,126	1,178	532		1,601
Dental & oral problems		4,227	3,303	1,140	4,481	1,961	925	133		210
Ear, nose, throat (ENT)	79	6,024	8,801	3,961	9,067	8,653	2,611	369		1,247
Endocrine/glandular problems		1,573	1,311	1,452	2,698	1,127	347			
Eye problems	12	4,126	4,391	1,634	5,184	3,798	977	119		853
Gastro-intestinal problems	329	38,585	61,481	19,145	68,905	34,270	16,550	3,279	8	6,666
Genitourinary & gynaecological disorders - exclude pregnancy related disorders	49	11,704	23,751	6,971	21,782	12,531	3,927	1,470		478
Headache/migraine	7	6,276	14,961	4,235	19,502	8,008	3,772	1,603		1,847
Heart, cardiac & circulatory problems	227	6,617	14,183	3,911	7,650	4,257	3,450	170		864
Infectious diseases	21	1,945	1,985	335	1,992	940	1,058	96		171
Injury, fracture	514	46,492	41,506	10,776	32,988	23,395	9,262	1,809		5,319
Menopause	2	256	668	436	1,429	882	53	8		
Menstrual Health Related Illness		179	430	53	284	283	85			29
Nervous system disorders - exclude headache, migraine	253	7,622	8,150	2,736	9,667	8,691	2,557	927		2,389
Other known causes - not otherwise classified	1,247	45,520	67,717	21,428	67,471	39,009	26,831	6,892	8	6,561
Other musculoskeletal problems	625	37,354	61,919	14,121	47,570	23,988	11,885	1,616		3,262
Pregnancy related disorders		4,124	9,489	3,102	20,623	10,107	5,444	567		683
Skin disorders	20	3,721	6,692	575	4,476	1,682	212	508		87
Substance abuse - include alcoholism & drug dependence		560	23		83	897	340	0		
Unknown causes/not specified	79	21,092	22,809	7,557	32,654	17,489	9,069	3,730		17,040
Violence & Aggression		89	53		229					8

Table 4: No. of Staff Absent by Sickness Absence Reason and Grade

Sickness Absence Reason	Grade								Senior Managers	Medical
	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Band 5	Band 6	Band 7	Band 8+		
Anxiety/stress/depression/other psychiatric illnesses	11	572	813	284	952	571	256	55	5<	93
Asthma		11	26	6	20	11	14	<5		5<
Back problems	5<	320	361	92	314	170	67	17	5<	32
Benign and malignant tumours, cancers		39	39	10	38	30	13	<5		12
Blood disorders		13	15	5<	10	8	5<	5<		
Burns, poisoning, frostbite, hypothermia		8	14	5<	7	5<	5<			<5
Chest & respiratory problems	<5	254	326	104	338	217	117	48		39
Cold, cough, flu - influenza	14	1,258	1,889	775	2,578	1,741	901	270		535
Covid-related illness		72	105	46	80	76	50	17		33
Dental & oral problems		138	160	40	161	97	53	7		16
Ear, nose, throat (ENT)	5<	164	218	84	281	185	87	17		32
Endocrine/glandular problems		15	20	10	40	12	6			
Eye problems	5<	64	69	29	79	52	25	5<		20
Gastro-intestinal problems	18	1,186	1,627	621	2,093	1,151	551	136	5<	343
Genitourinary & gynaecological disorders - exclude pregnancy related disorders	5<	131	281	95	286	180	76	19		22
Headache/migraine	5<	292	530	214	691	434	219	74		137
Heart, cardiac & circulatory problems	5<	50	95	29	83	35	23	5<		5<
Infectious diseases	5<	31	33	13	45	27	15	5<		6
Injury, fracture	6	332	333	91	291	174	83	20		49
Menopause	5<	7	14	8	13	15	5<	5<		
Menstrual Health Related Illness		17	11	5<	18	17	7			5<
Nervous system disorders - exclude headache, migraine	5<	46	59	21	53	47	14	7		6
Other known causes - not otherwise classified	12	533	709	247	885	481	257	88	5<	102
Other musculoskeletal problems	8	310	429	130	404	196	99	16		23
Pregnancy related disorders		39	102	32	202	124	56	11		13
Skin disorders	5<	43	78	19	66	35	15	5<		6
Substance abuse - include alcoholism & drug dependence		5<	5<		5<	5<	5<			
Unknown causes/not specified	7	461	637	164	827	386	202	74		482
Violence & Aggression		5<	5<		7					<5

Notes:

Due to the level of detail requested, producing a full cross-tabulation of all three criteria would result in a highly granular dataset with a significant risk of identifying individuals and therefore not possible. To provide meaningful information while protecting confidentiality, we have instead supplied two separate sections, one by **Division** and another by **Grade**.

Each section has two tables which includes:

Total **hours lost** (please note that absence is recorded in hours rather than working days), and the **number of staff members absent**, broken down by sickness absence reason.

To further protect confidentiality:

Directorates have been aggregated to **Division level**, and any values 5 or fewer have been **suppressed**.

Regarding the methodology used:

Staff are counted once per sickness absence reason within each Division or Grade category. Where an individual has:

Multiple sickness absence reasons, they will be counted multiple times (once per reason), and they will also be counted separately within each relevant Division or Grade.

As a result, the same individual may appear more than once within the dataset.

The data provided relates to the financial year 2025/26 (1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026).

The sickness absence reasons reflect the nationally prescribed absence reasons.

We are not able to differentiate between work and non-work related absences.