

Date 12 August 2026
Your Ref
Our Ref 11693

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

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – VIOLENCE AND AGRESSION

I write in response to your request for information in relation to violence and aggression.

Question:

Please provide the following information for each ED site managed by the Board, broken down by month, between January 2018 and May 2026:

- Please provide the total number of reported incidents involving violence, aggression, or abusive behaviour in Emergency Departments*

Answer:

We have provided data reported under the adverse event category of **“Violence/aggression/other unwanted behaviours”**. The table below details the number of adverse events (incidents) recorded against NHS Lothian Emergency Departments for the period 01/01/2018 to 31/05/2026. The data is broken down by Ward/Dept and Calendar Year.

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
RHCYP Emergency Department	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5	6	≤5	0	≤5
RIE Emergency Department	30	48	35	35	70	52	68	68	91
StJ A&E	22	15	13	30	15	23	33	17	12

Question:

- Where available, please separately categorise [LO1] incidents by type, including:*

- *Verbal abuse*
- *threats of violence*
- *physical assault*
- *sexual harassment*
- *discrimination-based abuse (because of: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation)*

Answer:

The table below details the number of adverse events (incidents) recorded against NHS Lothian Emergency Departments for the period 01/01/2018 to 31/05/2026. The data is broken down by Sub Category and Calendar Year.

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Animal aggression to staff	0	0	0	≤5	0	0	0	0	0
Carrying an offensive weapon (Pre 08/12/25)	≤5	0	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5	0
Other to Staff violence (physical)	0	≤5	≤5	6	≤5	≤5	≤5	7	≤5
Other to Staff aggression (verbal)	≤5	≤5	≤5	6	≤5	≤5	7	≤5	6
Patient to Other aggression (verbal)	≤5	≤5	0	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5	0	≤5
Patient to Other violence (physical)	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5	0	≤5
Patient to Patient aggression (verbal)	0	0	0	≤5	0	0	0	≤5	≤5
Patient to Patient violence (physical)	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5	8
Patient to Staff aggression (verbal)	23	21	15	21	29	26	33	27	35
Patient to Staff violence (physical)	19	27	21	22	38	28	37	30	30
Staff to Patient aggression (verbal)	≤5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Staff to Patient violence (physical)	0	0	0	0	≤5	≤5	0	0	0
Staff to Staff aggression (verbal)	0	0	0	0	0	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5
Staff to Staff violence (physical)	≤5	0	0	0	0	0	0	≤5	0
Other - Please only use if no alternative	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5	9	9	6	12

The table below details the number of adverse events (incidents) recorded against NHS Lothian Emergency Departments for the period 01/01/2018 to 31/05/2026. The data is broken down by Contributory Factors V&A and Calendar Year.

Harassment and **Sexual Assault** were added to Contributory Factors V&A on 08/12/2025.

Carrying an offensive weapon moved from a Sub Category to Contributory Factors V&A on 08/12/2025.

Please note that there can be **more than one contributory factor recorded for each adverse event**. Out of the 693 adverse events reported, there were 986 contributory factors recorded.

[illegible]

Homophobic abuse	0	0	0	0	0	≤5	≤5	≤5	0
Medical condition	6	6	8	7	≤5	8	≤5	15	≤5
Mental state	12	19	15	22	22	22	24	26	41
Racial abuse	0	0	0	0	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5
Safe system of working compromised	0	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5	6	≤5	6
Sectarian abuse	≤5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sexual abuse	0	0	0	0	0	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5
Sexual Assault	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	≤5
Staffing levels / mix	≤5	≤5	0	≤5	8	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5
Stress / Anxiety	10	9	6	9	9	12	10	16	18

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