

Date 27 August 2026
Your Ref
Our Ref 11796

Enquiries to Richard Mutch
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Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – STAFF OUTWITH SCOTLAND

I write in response to your request for information in relation to staff living outwith Scotland.

Question:

- To ask how many health board staff currently are listed as having their main residence outside Scotland.

Could you disclose how many employees have their address in England, Wales or Northern Ireland.

In addition, if any staff live mainly outside of the UK, could you please disclose the country of their residence.

Finally, if you hold the information, could you state how many staff lived outside of Scotland in the following years: 2025/26, 2024/25, 2023/24

Answer:

Country	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
England	215	240	385
Northern Ireland	33	28	47
Outside of UK	17	48	80
Scotland	27,967	28,026	28,764
Unknown*	0	5<	8
Wales	6	9	15

This can be where staff have just joined or have moved address and is still being processed.

Please also note we have many staff who commute from Newcastle or Northumberland etc, and we will have staff who can do their role remotely almost exclusively. We have a Flexible Work Location Policy in the Once for Scotland terms and conditions which state this is acceptable.

We follow Scottish Government policy - [Flexible Work Location Policy | NHS Scotland](#)

Notes

- Residence has been determined using the employee address information held within NHS Lothian's workforce systems at the time of reporting and figures are dependent on accuracy of employee recorded address information.
- Staff have been categorised based on the postcode or address information recorded. While it has been possible to identify employees whose recorded address is within Scotland, England, Wales, Northern Ireland, or outside the UK, the data held does not readily support the consistent identification of the specific country of residence for employees residing outside the UK. Consequently, these employees have been reported as "Outside UK".
- The figures reflect the address recorded on NHS Lothian's workforce systems and may not necessarily represent an employee's primary residence if their details have not been updated.

To protect the identity of the individuals involved any figure of 5 or less has not been shown in the table 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.nhsllothian.scot/FOI/Pages/default.aspx>

Yours sincerely

ALISON MACDONALD
Executive Director, Nursing
Cc: Chief Executive