Lothian NHS Board

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Date 16/10/2026
Our Ref 11487

Enquiries to Richard Mutch
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Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – CATARACT WAITING LISTS

I write in response to your request for information in relation to cataract waiting lists.

Question:
1. Current triage criteria and pathways used for cataract referrals, including any clinical prioritisation guidance
2. Policies or standard operating procedures governing cataract waiting lists

Answer:

1.	No current written criteria or prioritisation guidance although patients with vision in one eye only, people who are a significant falls risk and / or carers for an individual are prioritised as well as those with poorer vision.
2.	The NHS Scotland Access Policy states that patients should be seen within 12 weeks from the date of referral. Surgery should be undertaken within 12 weeks from the date the patient and clinician agree to proceed with the operation.

Question:
3. Current actual (not target) waiting list times for cataract procedures, including any distinctions by priority category

Answer:

a) Inpatients

PRIORITY	PATIENTS	AVERAGE DAYS WAITING
Routine	1253	104.9
Urgent	432	73.5

b) Outpatients

PRIORITY	PATIENTS	AVERAGE DAYS WAITING
Routine	1061	326.7
Urgent	230	58.8

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