

Date 07 October 2026
Your Ref
Our Ref 11850

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

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – SERIOUS ADVERSE EVENTS

I write in response to your request for information in relation serious adverse events within Maternity Services.

Question:

1. ***How many significant/serious adverse events there has been within maternity and neonatal services between 1st Jan 2019 and 30th June 2026 (If 2026 data not available, until 31st December 2025) - can this be broken down by year and maternity vs neonatal services***

Answer:

The table below details the number of significant/serious adverse events (major harm/death) recorded in NHS Lothian maternity and neonatal services for the period 01/01/2019 to 30/06/2026. The table is broken down by Service Area and calendar year.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Women's Services - Maternity	41	48	43	45	43	51	60	20
Women's Services - Neonatal	19	20	24	28	27	26	19	23

Question:

2. ***Can this data then indicate whether it resulted in death, major injury or minor injury, again distinguishing between maternity and neonatal services and by year***

Answer:

The table below is broken down by Service Area, Severity and calendar year.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Maternity: Major harm	13	11	14	16	12	13	13	8
Maternity: Death	28	37	29	29	31	38	47	12
Neonatal: Major harm	6	7	≤5	6	8	≤5	6	7
Neonatal: Death	13	13	*	22	19	*	13	16

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). Figures marked * have also been withheld to prevent these smaller numbers being calculated from the totals in the first table.

Incidents are recorded against the service area where they occurred, so deaths recorded under Women's Services - Maternity include the deaths of babies where the incident occurred within maternity services. Of the 251 deaths recorded under Maternity between 2019 and 2026, 240 were stillbirths or deaths of babies and 11 were adult deaths.

Question:

3. ***Can the data from Q1+2 be further broken down by hospital where they occurred***

Answer:

The table below is broken down by Service Area and hospital for the period 01/01/2019 to 30/06/2026. Incidents at the Royal Hospital for Children & Young People and the Western General Hospital have been grouped with St John's Hospital to avoid the release of small numbers. A further breakdown by year and severity has not been provided, as this would result in small numbers that could identify the individuals involved.

	Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh	St John's Hospital and other sites
Women's Services - Maternity	264	87
Women's Services - Neonatal	176	10

Question:

4. ***From these cases, how many had a significant adverse event review (SAER) commissioned and how many days from the event did they take to complete***

Answer:

Of these adverse events, 433 had a significant adverse event review commissioned, including Level 1 SAE reviews and perinatal mortality reviews. 380 of these have been completed, taking an average of 218 days from the date the adverse event was reported to the date the review was closed.

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