

Date 01 October 2026
Your Ref
Our Ref 11894

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Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – DEMENTIA ASSESSMENT

I write in response to your request for information in relation to dementia assessment.

Question:

1. What are the referral criteria for dementia (memory) assessment within NHS Lothian (i.e., as provided by Older People's Mental Health teams/Memory Assessment and Treatment Service/Older Adult Mental Health team or equivalent)?
In other words, on what basis are decisions made whether to accept or reject such referrals? If the criteria vary depending on team/locality, please provide a breakdown.

Answer:

Referral criteria for memory clinics across Lothian:

All physical bloods and causes ruled out for memory issues by referrer. A memory screening usually a MOCA or GPgog baseline and a collateral history of onset and symptoms.

Referrals are not usually rejected but can be passed to other teams if more appropriate, such as depression and anxiety being more prevalent than memory issues. Also if risk has increased these referrals will be seen sooner than routine.

Question:

2. The following prisons fall within the NHS Lothian footprint: HMP Edinburgh (EH11 3LN) and HMP Addiewell (EH55 8QF)

For each of the above prisons, does the corresponding dementia (memory) assessment service (i.e., the service covering the geographic area within which the prison is situated) accept referrals from the prison healthcare team of prisoners for the purposes of dementia (memory) assessment, provided all other referral criteria are met?

If the answer varies by team, please provide a breakdown.

If for any team the answer is no, what is the reason for not accepting such referrals?

Answer:

No, there is no current pathways agreed from prisons to memory services in Lothian. The prisons have their own health care, they do their own cognitive screening and are run by forensic psychiatrists for diagnosis.

Question:

3. Do NHS Lothian dementia (memory) assessment services accept referrals from prisons out with the NHS Lothian footprint for prisoners who resided within the NHS Lothian footprint at the time of their incarceration, for the purposes of dementia (memory) assessment?
If the answer varies by team, please provide a breakdown.

Answer:

No current pathway or referral process in place from prisons to memory services within Lothian.

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