Lothian NHS Board

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Date 20 October 2026
Your Ref
Our Ref 11969

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Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS

I write in response to your request for information in relation to hospital admissions.

Question:

- Under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, please provide the following information for each financial year from 2021/22 to 2025/26:

1. The number of patients discharged following a **drug-related hospital stay** who had another drug-related hospital stay within 30 days, and within 90 days, of discharge.

2. The number of patients discharged following an **alcohol-related hospital stay** who had another alcohol-related hospital stay within 30 days, and within 90 days, of discharge.

3. The number of patients who had three or more drug-related hospital stays during the financial year, and the total number of stays involving those patients.

4. The number of patients who had three or more alcohol-related hospital stays during the financial year, and the total number of stays involving those patients.

Answer:

Table 1. Drug-related admissions: number of patients with an inpatient admission within 30 and 90 days of discharge

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Within 30 days	136	49	91	53	78
Within 90 days	194	79	141	93	114

Table 2. Alcohol-related admissions: number of patients with an inpatient admission within 30 and 90 days of discharge

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Within 30 days	43	30	55	32	51
Within 90 days	73	67	85	61	75

Table 3. Drug-related admissions: Number of patients with 3+ admissions and total admissions for these patients

Number of admissions	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Patients with 3+ admissions	81	30	51	26	38
Total admissions for these patients	437	140	216	109	177

Table 4. Alcohol-related admissions: Number of patients with 3+ admissions and total admissions for these patients

Number of admissions	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Patients with 3+ admissions	43	33	35	18	37
Total admissions for these patients	163	130	149	79	166

Notes:
Drug-related admissions were defined as unplanned inpatient admissions where the main diagnosis codes included F11-F16 or F18-F19 (Mental and behavioural disorders due to psychoactive substance use, excluding alcohol and tobacco) or T36-T50 (Poisoning by drugs, medicaments and biological substances). F17 (Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of tobacco/nicotine) was excluded from the definition.

Alcohol-related admissions were defined as unplanned inpatient admissions where the main diagnosis codes included F10 (Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of alcohol) or T51 (Toxic effect of alcohol).

Diagnoses recorded in secondary diagnosis fields were not included; therefore, the analysis identifies admissions where drug or alcohol use was recorded among primary reasons for admission.

Inpatient admissions were assigned to financial years based on admission date (i.e. the admission date must fall within the financial year being reported). Time between admissions is defined as the interval between a discharge date and the subsequent admission date; the discharge date does not need to fall within the same financial year as the subsequent admission.

It is not possible to distinguish between accidental and deliberate consumption, nor between illicit and prescription drugs.

The data present a count of patients unless stated otherwise.

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