Lothian NHS Board

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Date 13 November 2026
Your Ref
Our Ref 11878

Enquiries to Richard Mutch
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Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – WOMEN'S HEALTHCARE SERVICES

I write in response to your request for information in relation women's healthcare services.

Question:
1. Services Provided
A comprehensive list of all women's healthcare services currently delivered within NHS Scotland, including:

- Gynaecology
- Menopause services
- Fertility and reproductive health
- Pelvic pain, endometriosis, adenomyosis and PMDD pathways
- Maternity care
- Women's mental health services
- Specialist clinics (e.g., recurrent miscarriage, complex hormonal conditions)

For each service, please outline scope, eligibility criteria, and geographical availability.

Answer:

A comprehensive list of all women's healthcare services currently delivered within NHS Lothian:

- Gynaecology Outpatients:
  - Cervical Health Assessment
  - Colposcopy
  - General Gynae
  - Chronic Pain – Dietetic
  - Cystoscopy
  - Cystoscopy & Botox
  - ENDOX (Endometriosis)
  - Hysteroscopy
  - Menstrual Dysfunction
  - MVA
  - Oncology / Rapid Access
  - Perineal
  - PMB

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    - Recurrent Miscarriage
    - Skins
    - Joint Continence
    - Urogynae
    - Gynaecology Triage
- Full Gynaecology inpatient service with two acute wards across two hospitals (RIE + SJH)
- Pregnancy Support
- Fertility
    - Fertility
    - Assisted Conception (IVF, ICSI, DI etc) – Eligibility criteria as per Access Criteria for IVF Treatment in Scotland.
    - Reproductive Endocrinology
- Maternity care
    - **Antenatal care**: booking, community midwifery care, antenatal screening and scans, and additional care for women with existing health conditions.
    - **Specialist antenatal clinics**: including a Metabolic Antenatal Clinic (including diabetes in pregnancy), a Preterm Birth Clinic, a Small Baby Research Clinic, and a Birth Choices Clinic for women considering their options after a previous caesarean birth.
    - **Maternity triage**: assessment for women with concerns in pregnancy or who think they are in labour.
    - **Labour and birth**: the labour wards at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh and St John's Hospital, the Lothian Birth Centre (midwife-led unit) at the Royal Infirmary, and home birth, including outpatient induction of labour for eligible women.
    - **Postnatal care**: inpatient postnatal wards and community midwifery care at home, including infant feeding support, followed by handover to health visiting.
    - **Neonatal care:** the Neonatal Unit at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh and the Special Care Baby Unit at St John's Hospital.
    - **Bereavement support:** following the loss of a baby or a miscarriage.
    - **Perinatal mental health**: women are signposted to NHS Lothian Mental Health Services, which are managed separately from maternity.

All cover NHS Lothian catchment area, other than Oncology which covers south east Scotland (see SCAN website for further details)

Question:

2. Costs, Funding & Residuals

For each service listed above, please provide:

- Annual cost of delivering the service
- Per-patient cost where available
- National and regional funding allocations
- Any additional investment made under the Women's Health Plan
- A breakdown of money spent versus money allocated
- Details of any residual or unspent funds, including:

- The amount of residual funding
- Where these residual funds were redirected
- The rationale for redirecting or retaining residual funds
- Any governance decisions or financial controls applied

Answer:

NHS Lothian allocates budgets at directorate level. Women's Services has its own directorate budget, but this is not broken down by the individual services listed in your request. Many staff work across several parts of the service, so costs cannot be attributed to individual services, calculated per patient, or broken down by funding source. NHS Lothian is therefore unable to provide annual or per-patient costs for each service, a breakdown of spend against allocation by service, or details of residual funds at service level, and is applying Section 17 of FOISA (information not held) to these parts of your request.

High level view of spend in Women's services in the last 5 financial years:

2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
£56,623,948.11	£58,377,713.11	£63,167,622.59	£69,633,504.48	£75,895,433.37

National and regional funding allocations, including investment made under the Women's Health Plan, are determined by the Scottish Government. You may wish to contact the Scottish Government directly for this information: https://www.gov.scot/about/contact-information/

Question:

3. Service Usage

Data showing how women are currently using these services, including:

- Annual patient numbers
- Referral volumes
- Waiting list sizes
- Average waiting times
- Demographic breakdowns where available

Answer:

NHS Lothian does not hold a single set of key performance indicators, outcome measures or patient satisfaction data covering all of the services listed. However, a range of performance, outcome and patient experience information for these services is already published, including NHS Lothian data. NHS Lothian is therefore applying Section 25 of FOISA (information otherwise accessible) and directs you to the following sources:

- Waiting times: Public Health Scotland, NHS waiting times by stage of treatment, by health board and specialty
  https://publichealthscotland.scot/publications/nhs-waiting-times-stage-of-treatment/

- Births and maternity outcomes: Public Health Scotland, Births in Scotland https://publichealthscotland.scot/publications/births-in-scotland/
- Perinatal mortality: MBRRACE-UK perinatal mortality surveillance reports, including health board level rates https://timms.le.ac.uk/mbrrace-uk-perinatal-mortality/surveillance/
- Gynaecological cancer: Public Health Scotland, cancer quality performance indicators https://publichealthscotland.scot/publications/endometrial-cancer/ https://publichealthscotland.scot/publications/cervical-cancer/
- Fertility: Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority, clinic profile and outcomes for Edinburgh Fertility Centre https://www.hfea.gov.uk/choose-a-clinic/clinic-search/results/201-edinburgh-fertility-centre
- Patient experience: Scottish Government, Maternity Care Survey https://www.gov.scot/collections/maternity-care-survey/ Care Opinion: https://www.careopinion.org.uk

This information is exempt under Section 25 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 - Information otherwise accessible

(1) Information which the applicant can reasonably obtain other than by requesting it under section 1(1) is exempt information.

These are recurring publications. Public Health Scotland, MBRRACE-UK, the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority and the Scottish Government publish updates on a regular basis.

Question:

4. Goals and Targets

Information on national and regional goals relating to women's healthcare, including:

- Strategic priorities
- Targets for waiting times, outcomes, and service expansion
- Commitments under the Women's Health Plan and subsequent updates

Answer:

NHS Lothian does not set separate local targets for women's healthcare. Our services work to the national strategic priorities, targets and commitments set by the Scottish Government. These include the national waiting times standards, such as the 12-week outpatient standard, the 12-week Treatment Time Guarantee, the 18-week Referral to Treatment standard and the cancer waiting times standards, along with the commitments in the Women's Health Plan.

Details of these targets and commitments are published by the Scottish Government. NHS Lothian is therefore applying Section 25 of FOISA (information otherwise accessible) and directs you to:

Women's Health Plan: https://www.gov.scot/publications/womens-health-plan/

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NHS Scotland waiting times standards: https://www.publichealthscotland.scot/our-areas-of-work/waiting-times/

Question:
5. Performance and Outcomes
Performance data for each service area, including:

- Key performance indicators
- Outcome measures
- Patient satisfaction data
- Published audits, evaluations, or improvement plans

Answer:
See response to question 3.

Question:
6. Hospital Admissions

- Within the Health-board where patient is on waiting list to be seen
- Outcome measures
- Patient satisfaction data
- Published audits, evaluations, or improvement plans

Answer:
See response to question 3.

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