Lothian NHS Board

NHS Lothian Headquarters
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Date 10 November 2026
Your Ref
Our Ref 12021

Enquiries to Richard Mutch
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Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – HERNIA REPAIR

I write in response to your request for information in relation to hernia repairs.

Question:

1. The total number of referrals for hernia repair broken down by different types of hernias.
   a. The median waits for hernia repair broken down by different types of hernias.
   b. Median wait time variation for more simple hernia repair procedures (e.g., Inguinal/Parastomal) versus more complex hernia procedures, and type of clinical staff completing each hernia repair procedure.

2. The 5 longest completed waits for hernia repair broken down by different types of hernias and type of clinical staff completing each hernia repair procedure.

3. The 5 longest ongoing waits for hernia repair broken down by different types of hernias.

Answer:

Please see enclosed spreadsheet. 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). For the same reason we cannot provide the *longest wait* as this is highly identifiable in relation to the individual. We have provided the 90th percentile waits as an alternative to longest waits.

We cannot provide a breakdown of simple versus complex hernia procedures, and type of clinical staff completing each hernia repair procedure as this is not recorded in a centrally extractanble format, if held at all.

Question:

4. Please provide the budget allocation and total expenditure by your board utilized to help eliminate Hernia repair waiting times for each calendar year from 2018 to 2026 (most recent).

Answer:

I am advised by the Finance Department of NHS Lothian that we cannot split out the figures at this level so are unable to provide the information to answer this question.

Under the Freedom of Information Act NHS Lothian is not required to create new records to enable it to respond to your enquiry. This information is not collated or held in aggregate form and it would be necessary to review all case files and finance ledgers in relation to hernia repair over the period you have requested to assemble the information you seek. Even if NHS Lothian did this – and there would be significant cost implications in doing so – it would be unable to respond in full to your request. The information requested is therefore exempt under section 12.1 – Cost.

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
Enc.

Inguinal Hernia Repair waiting times - FOI12021

Questions: For each calendar year from 2018 to 2026 (most recent):

1. The total number of referrals for hernia repair broken down by different types of hernias.
a. The median waits for hernia repair broken down by different types of hernias.
b. Median wait time variation for more simple hernia repair procedures (e.g., Inguinal/Parastomal) versus more complex hernia procedures, and type of clinical staff completing each hernia repair procedure.
2. The 5 longest completed waits for hernia repair broken down by different types of hernias and type of clinical staff completing each hernia repair procedure.
3. The 5 longest ongoing waits for hernia repair broken down by different types of hernias.
4. Please provide the budget allocation and total expenditure by your board utilized to help eliminate Hernia repair waiting times for each calendar year from 2018 to 2026 (most recent).

Source: TRAK ORACLE ***Please note that this analysis comes from a LIVE System - if this analysis were to be re-run at a later date the figures may be subject to change.***
Date Extracted: 4th Nov 2026

Answers:

1. Number of completed waits by calendar year

Local Procedure	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026*
Epigastric Hernia Repair					5<	9	20	34	33
Femoral Hernia Repair	18	21	13	6	11	14	9	14	9
Hiatal Hernia Repair						5<		5<	5<
Incisional Hernia Repair	180	179	56	97	78	111	106	73	67
Inguinal Hernia Repair	785	609	272	331	283	492	546	631	495
Other Hernia Repair	22	9	10	5<	6	21	7	5<	
Paediatric Hernia Repair	88	91	68	50	68	90	100	63	69
Umbilical Hernia Repair	210	242	88	72	85	144	190	298	210
Ventral Hernia Repair	5<	5<			5<	5<	5<	11	5<

2. Median Waits (days) by calendar year

Local Procedure	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026*
Epigastric Hernia Repair					88.5	328.0	688.0	645.0	430.0
Femoral Hernia Repair	86.5	99.0	70.0	226.5	31.0	250.5	615.0	518.5	251.0
Hiatal Hernia Repair						504.0		20.0	26.0
Incisional Hernia Repair	114.5	160.0	223.0	186.0	362.0	419.0	673.0	595.0	517.0
Inguinal Hernia Repair	103.0	152.0	206.0	151.0	380.0	402.0	611.0	564.0	341.0
Other Hernia Repair	81.5	94.0	119.0	73.0	483.0	443.0	292.0	329.0	
Paediatric Hernia Repair	48.5	105.0	35.0	61.5	60.0	79.5	118.0	133.0	98.0
Umbilical Hernia Repair	95.0	164.5	261.5	144.5	496.0	457.5	646.0	576.0	318.0
Ventral Hernia Repair	71.0	121.5			668.0	257.0	466.0	610.0	522.5

3. 98th Percentile (days) by calendar year

Local Procedure	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026*
Epigastric Hernia Repair					173.5	598.6	904.4	823.8	761.4
Femoral Hernia Repair	234.9	288.4	392.2	514.3	519.4	795.0	947.1	781.2	688.7
Hiatal Hernia Repair						592.3		20.0	26.0
Incisional Hernia Repair	230.7	323.6	514.7	832.1	1196.0	1301.6	1076.6	847.8	716.0
Inguinal Hernia Repair	235.6	315.5	457.5	730.0	1099.6	1116.8	830.6	833.4	728.1
Other Hernia Repair	201.2	223.2	365.4	213.7	562.5	838.2	1228.3	489.3	
Paediatric Hernia Repair	176.6	206.6	320.7	539.6	572.8	340.2	577.3	629.7	514.7
Umbilical Hernia Repair	233.8	316.9	510.6	759.5	1081.5	1262.6	838.4	833.2	733.9
Ventral Hernia Repair	104.6	164.2			926.2	347.2	791.4	835.8	598.6

Notes

Includes completed inpatient waits that were seen for any Hernia Procedure between '01,Jan,2018' and '30,Sep,2026'
This answer includes the completed inpatient wait for any Hernia procedure, before being added to this waiting list the patient will have to have seen a consultant in an outpatient appointment. The wait for this appointment is not included in this answer.
We cant provide answers to q1b, 2 and 3 for data unavailablity reasons;
We can't provide a breakdown of simple versus complex hernia procedures, and type of clinical staff completing each hernia repair procedure.
We can't provide the longest ongoing waits for patient confidentiality reasons. 98th percentile has been included as a proxy for longest wait.