Lothian NHS Board

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Date: 16/11/2026
Our Ref: 12085
Enquiries to loth.freedomofinfomation@nhs.scot

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT STAY

I write in response to your request for information in relation to Emergency Department attendances in NHS Lothian.

Question:

Please provide the following information for each Type 1 emergency department operated by the board. For each month from 1 January 2025 to 30 September 2026, please provide:

1. The number of A&E attendances where the patient spent: more than 24 hours; more than 36 hours; more than 48 hours in the emergency department.

Answer:

The information you have requested is detailed in the tables below. I have not released numbers of 5 or fewer in the tables, as this information could lead to the identification of the individuals involved. Since we do not have their consent to release their personal data, the information is exempt under section 38 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 as to provide it would breach the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018.

Emergency Department attendances where the patient spend more than 24 hours, NHS Lothian

Month	Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh	St John's Hospital	Western General Hospital	Royal Hospital for Children and Young People
2025-01	748	142	53	0
2025-02	226	47	9	0
2025-03	24	29	≤5	0
2025-04	74	41	≤5	0
2025-05	31	22	7	0
2025-06	10	9	≤5	≤5
2025-07	17	9	22	0
2025-08	17	20	46	0
2025-09	19	18	11	0

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Emergency Department attendances where the patient spend more than 24 hours, NHS Lothian				
Month	Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh	St John's Hospital	Western General Hospital	Royal Hospital for Children and Young People
2025-10	9	9	14	0
2025-11	13	68	18	0
2025-12	86	54	38	0
2026-01	60	96	34	≤5
2026-02	50	81	12	0
2026-03	28	68	7	0
2026-04	9	40	8	≤5
2026-05	31	84	10	0
2026-06	12	16	29	≤5
2026-07	9	27	≤5	0
2026-08	17	55	≤5	≤5
2026-09	70	25	14	0

Emergency Department attendances where the patient spend more than 36 hours, NHS Lothian				
Month	Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh	St John's Hospital	Western General Hospital	Royal Hospital for Children and Young People
2025-01	183	9	≤5	0
2025-02	19	≤5	≤5	0
2025-03	13	≤5	0	0
2025-04	31	≤5	0	0
2025-05	15	≤5	0	0
2025-06	≤5	≤5	0	0
2025-07	9	≤5	≤5	0
2025-08	6	≤5	0	0
2025-09	≤5	≤5	≤5	0
2025-10	0	0	0	0
2025-11	≤5	≤5	≤5	0
2025-12	≤5	7	≤5	0
2026-01	≤5	7	≤5	0
2026-02	8	7	0	0
2026-03	≤5	≤5	0	0
2026-04	≤5	≤5	0	0
2026-05	0	≤5	≤5	0

Emergency Department attendances where the patient spend more than 36 hours, NHS Lothian				
Month	Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh	St John's Hospital	Western General Hospital	Royal Hospital for Children and Young People
2026-06	≤5	≤5	≤5	0
2026-07	≤5	≤5	0	0
2026-08	9	≤5	0	0
2026-09	8	≤5	0	0

Emergency Department attendances where the patient spend more than 48 hours, NHS Lothian				
Month	Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh	St John's Hospital	Western General Hospital	Royal Hospital for Children and Young People
2025-01	14	≤5	0	0
2025-02	≤5	≤5	≤5	0
2025-03	10	0	0	0
2025-04	20	0	0	0
2025-05	9	0	≤5	0
2025-06	≤5	0	≤5	0
2025-07	6	≤5	≤5	0
2025-08	≤5	0	≤5	0
2025-09	≤5	≤5	≤5	0
2025-10	0	0	0	0
2025-11	≤5	≤5	≤5	0
2025-12	≤5	0	≤5	0
2026-01	≤5	≤5	≤5	0
2026-02	≤5	0	≤5	0
2026-03	≤5	0	0	0
2026-04	0	0	0	0
2026-05	0	≤5	0	0
2026-06	≤5	≤5	0	0
2026-07	≤5	0	0	0
2026-08	7	0	0	0
2026-09	≤5	0	0	0

Question:

2. The longest recorded A&E stay during 2026 to date, broken down by hospital.

Answer:

I am not able to provide this information, as due to the small numbers this information could lead to the identification of the individuals involved. Since we do not have their consent to release their personal data, the information is exempt under section 38 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 as to provide it would breach the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018.

Question:

3. Please confirm whether the board centrally records or collates the number of patients receiving care in hospital corridors or other areas not ordinarily designated for patient care because normal clinical capacity was unavailable.

4. If so, please provide the number of patients recorded as receiving such care, broken down by month and hospital, from 1 January 2025 to 30 September 2026

Answer:

This information is not collected centrally. Information may be held in individual patient records, but in order to provide the information you request it would be necessary to review each patient record over the period you have specified, requiring significant resources. Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, NHS Lothian is not required to respond to your request if the resources required to do so equate to more than £600 in 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 https://www.foi.scot/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 reviewer at the address at the top 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

Yours sincerely

ALISON MACDONALD
Executive Director of Nursing Midwifery and AHPs
Cc: Chief Executive