

Freedom of Information request 267-17

Request

Q1) Could you please tell me how many people have successfully sought NHS treatment to remove or partially remove tattoos over the last five years. Please break this down by calendar year.

Q2) For the above, as far as possible, could you outline the reason each tattoo was considered for removal.

Q3) In total, how many people have been considered (ie, have not necessarily had their tattoo removed but have sought help) for tattoo removal on the NHS over the last five years? How many have been rejected?

Q3) If possible, could you tell me how much money has been spent by the NHS removing tattoos over the past five years. Again, please break this down by calendar year.

Response

NHS Borders patients requesting tattoo removals on the NHS would be referred onto NHS Lothian.

NHS Lothian follow NHS Scotland's 'The Adult Exceptional Aesthetic Referral Protocol' (AERP) when considering requests, as such aesthetic surgery is not routinely offered by the NHS and can only be provided on an exceptional case by case basis in line with the guidelines within this protocol.

The patient data received from NHS Lothian does not give the level of detail required to be able to identify patients having tattoo removal or associated costs. Therefore under Section 17 of the FOI(S)A 2002 this data is not held.

If you are not satisfied with the way your request has been handled or the decision given, you may ask NHS Borders to review its actions and the decision. If you would like to request a review please apply in writing to, Freedom of Information Review, NHS Borders, Room 2EC3, Education Centre, Borders General Hospital, Melrose, TD6 9BS or foi.enquiries@borders.scot.nhs.uk.

The request for a review should include your name and address for correspondence, the request for information to which the request relates and the issue which you wish to be reviewed. Please state the reference number **267-17** on this request. Your request should be made within 40 working days from receipt of this letter.

If following this review, you remain dissatisfied with the outcome, you may appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner and request an investigation of your complaint. Your request to the Scottish Information Commissioner should be in writing (or other permanent form), stating your name and an address for correspondence. You should provide the details of the request and your reasons for dissatisfaction with both the original response by NHS Borders and your reasons for dissatisfaction with the outcome of the internal review. Your application for an investigation by the Scottish Information Commissioner must be made within six months of your receipt of the response with which you are dissatisfied. The address for the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner is, Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, Fife.