

Freedom of Information request 35-18

Request

1. How many total staff members (headcount whole-time equivalent number) were recorded as being absent from work (off sick) for flu symptoms in the financial or calendar year 2015-2016, 2016-17, 2017 -18 (for 2017-18 - please supply figures as up to date as possible. For example, up to end of Jan 2018)
2. How many registered nurses (headcount whole-time equivalent on Agenda for Change band 5 and above) were
 - a) recorded as being absent from work (off sick) for flu symptoms in the financial or calendar year 2015-2016, 2016-17, 2017 -18 (for 2017-18 - please supply figures as up to date as possible. For example, up to end of Jan 2018)
 - b) for how many days were these recorded absences (total) - using the same periods stated above. Eg. 200 days from 2015-16
3. How many doctors (headcount whole-time equivalent number from foundation year one and above) were recorded as
 - a) being absent from work (off sick) for flu symptoms in the financial or calendar year 2015-2016, 2016-17, 2017 -18 (for 2017-18 - please supply figures as up to date as possible. For example, up to end of Jan 2018)
 - b) for many days were these recorded absences (total) for the same periods stated above. Eg. 200 days from 2015-16
4. Has the possibility of a mandatory flu vaccination for frontline NHS staff (for example, those working in A&E, adult or children's wards) been discussed at any trust meetings? If so, please provide details of what was said/discussed and on what date.

Response

	2015-16			2016-17			01/04/17 to 31/12/17		
	Head-count	WTE	Total Days	Head-count	WTE	Total Days	Head-count	WTE	Total Days
Absence with Flu Symptoms									
1. Total Staff Members	618	509		720	583		500	403	
2. Registered Nurses (A&C 5 and above)	275	230	794	303	252	1084	220	180	581.5
3. Doctors (FY1 and above)	18	17.6	38	16	15.35	22.5	14	12.5	30.5

Note:

- "Flu symptoms" are interpreted as sickness absence logged as "Cold, cough, flu – influenza" on SSTS.
- The "registered nurse (Agenda for Change band 5 and above)" is identified based on the employment status at the end of each of the periods. Information taken from SSPS.
- The "doctor" is identified based on the employment status at the end of each of the periods. Information taken from SSPS.
- January 2018 data cannot be provided as this is not updated on the system until 8 February 2018 therefore complete data would not be held for this period. Only full monthly data has been provided until 31 December 2017.

4. The possibility of a mandatory flu vaccination for frontline NHS staff has been discussed at the Strategy & Performance Committee meetings held on 7 September and 7 November 2017. The following data has been provided from the recorded minutes of the meetings held:

7.9.17 – “The Chair believed the target rate for the vaccination of staff leading in to the winter period was insufficiently rigorous. Dr Tim Patterson advised that the Scottish Government encouraged a 60% target rate. The Board Executive Team would be discussing the vaccination programme and clinical leadership to encourage take up by ward staff and all those working in clinical environments.

The Chair enquired if there were any contractual arrangements in regard to vaccination uptake and Mr John Cowie commented that he would look into it.”

7.11.17 – “Matters Arising:

5.1 Minute 7: Scottish Borders Health & Social Care Partnership Draft Winter Plan 2017/18: The meeting noted that Mr John Cowie was to provide an update on contractual arrangements in regard to vaccination uptake.”

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 **35-18** 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.