

Freedom of Information request 294-18

Request

Under the Freedom of Information Act can you please tell me for all GP out of hours services in your health board:

1. In the 12 months up to and including May 2018, on how many occasions was a GP out of hours service running with no GP?
2. In the 12 months up to and including May 2018, on how many occasions was a GP out of hours service closed due to rota gaps?

Response

1. The Borders Emergency Care Service (BECS) (out of hours service) is co-located with the BGH Emergency Department which includes in its team GP Specialty doctors. It is usual practice for these departments to provide support to one another in the event of a significant spike in demand or less often short notice staffing issues. From 1 May 2017 to 31 May 2018 there has been one occasion when Borders Emergency Care Service didn't have a GP overnight. On that night BECS was staffed by an Out of Hours Advanced Nurse Practitioner, (band seven) and supported by two (band six) Out of Hours Nurse Practitioners. Over and above the support offered from ED, advice was available from the BGH Hospital at Night Service and redirection arrangements were in place for children and patients with mental health issues. There were no patient safety issues reported.

Additionally, there have been 24 occasions (Monday-Friday) when the service has been without a GP between the hours of 1800-2000. Many of these gaps were planned with due cognisance to expected levels of demand for service and patient safety. A band seven ANP and a band six Nurse Practitioner were available at these times. In addition general practitioner advice was available by telephone from the service Clinical Lead as well as the other contingencies that are in place.

2. There are no instances of Borders Emergency Care Services (BECS) being unable to provide an out of hours primary care service. The BECS hub is based at the Borders General Hospital and does not operate out of any other health board sites.

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 **294-18** 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.