

Freedom of Information request 239-19

Request

Please provide me with information relating to foreign objects left inside patients during operations.

Please provide answers to the following questions, broken down by 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19.

If possible, please do so in .xls or similar spreadsheet format.

1. How many operations were carried out at the health board over the year?
2. During how many operations were foreign objects left inside a patient over the year?
 - a. Please specify what the items/ objects were
 - b. How many of these items were removed afterwards?
3. How many of these instances resulted in a compensation payout to the patient?
 - a. Please detail each of the payouts or, if this is not possible, the total paid out over the year
4. Please also tell me the total number of foreign objects left inside a patient in 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 combined.

Response

1. Please find below the number of operations carried out at NHS Borders in the years requested:

Financial Year	Number of procedures
2015/2016	7039
2016/2017	6632
2017/2018	6387
2018/2019	6297

2. Please find below the number of recorded incidents of foreign objects left inside a patient after surgery in the years requested:

Calendar Year	Surgical foreign object
2015	<5
2016	<5
2017	<5
2018	<5
2019	0

- a. Please note that as NHS Borders is such a small Board the number of incidents is very small, and to provide further details of these could allow individuals to be identified and we would be in breach of the Data Protection Act 1998. We are therefore withholding all other data under Section 38(2)(ii) of

the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. This is also in accordance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics any number that is less than five, actual numbers and potentially identifiable information is withheld to help maintain patient confidentiality due to potential risk of disclosure. Further information is available in the ISD Statistical Disclosure Control Protocol.

b. All items were removed.

3. There were <5 compensation payments made which totalled £5,500.

4. One foreign object was left inside a patient in each case listed above.

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 **239-19** 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.