

Freedom of Information request 486-19

Request

I am writing to request information relating to the pension tax relief issue that is currently impacting a significant number of NHS employees across the country. I would be grateful if you could respond to the following questions. Please advise if you need any clarification and I would be happy to provide this.

1. Whether your organisation has a policy of offering payment equivalent to the employer pension fund contributions to employees who opt out of the scheme? And if so:
 - a) when was this policy adopted?
 - b) is this option offered to all employees by default, or is it considered on a case by case basis following requests?
 - c) how many employees have taken advantage of this policy since its adoption?
 - d) what was the total value of payments made until the end of July 2019?
2. Whether your organisation has made an assessment of the number of employees who are likely breach the annual allowance? If so, what assessment was made?
3. How many employees have left employment as a result of pension taxation issues?
4. How many employees have applied to reduce their working hours as a result of pension taxation issues? And how many such applications were successful?
5. Whether an internal briefing or assessment on the impact of changes to pension taxation has been provided? If so, could a copy of that document be provided?

Response

1. NHS Borders has no such policy.
2. No organisational assessment has been made.
3. There is no record of employees leaving employment as a result of pension taxation.
4. NHS Borders do not hold data on the number of employees who have applied to reduce their working hours as a result of pension taxation issues. Some consultant medical staff have given notice on Extra Programmed Activities in the past year.
5. No internal briefing or assessment has taken place on the impact of changes to pension taxation.

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 **486-19** 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.