

## Freedom of Information request 215-20

---

### Request

1. When the statutory risk assessments were initially carried out what group classification was Covid-19 given as a biological agent, in accordance with the Control of Hazardous Substances (COSHH) Regulations 2003?
2. Was this group classification ever changed, if so, when, and on what basis?
3. How many NHS staff within your health board have been infected with Covid-19?
4. Were the risk assessments reviewed as a result of staff infections?
5. Were risk assessments carried out to the same standard before discharging patients to care homes?
6. Was your reply to my FOI request on 5/5/2020 co-ordinated with NHS Scotland?

### Response

1. COVID-19 was originally treated as Group 2.
2. The classification was revised to Group 3 in response to a change in guidance by the Advisory Committee on Dangerous Pathogens, issued by the HSE on 3 April 2020.
3. 89 staff within NHS Borders have been infected with COVID-19.
4. Risk assessments have been continually reviewed throughout our response to COVID-19, including staff infections.
5. Yes.
6. Within NHS Scotland all Boards follow the same HPS and HSE guidance and the heads of H&S Group share best practice/common interests and this was discussed. Our response accurately reflected the position of NHS Borders.

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](mailto: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 **215-20** 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.