

## Freedom of Information request 147-22

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### Request

- 1) How many employees of your health board have an ongoing absence from work owing to illness from COVID-19 that has been ongoing for 12 weeks or more as of 11 March 2022?
  - a. How many of these work in primary care services?
  - b. How many of these work in secondary care services?
- 2) How many employees of your health board have had an absence from work owing to illness from COVID-19 that lasted for 12 weeks or more between 30 January 2020 and 11 March 2022?
  - a. How many of these work in primary care services?
  - b. How many of these work in secondary care services?
- 3) How many RIDDOR reports has your health board submitted to HSE since 30 January 2020 relating to:
  - a. accidents or incidents at work which have, or could have, led to the release or escape of coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) (dangerous occurrences)?
  - b. a person at work (a worker) having been diagnosed as having COVID-19 attributed to an occupational exposure to coronavirus (a case of disease)?
  - c. the death of a worker as a result of occupational exposure to coronavirus (a work-related death due to exposure to a biological agent)?

### Response

1. At NHS Borders, as at 11 March 2022 there are 6 ongoing absences of over 12 weeks owing to illness from Covid-19.
  - a & b. Due to the small number of employees who have an ongoing absence of over 12 weeks, to provide a breakdown of whether they work in Primary or Secondary care could allow these individuals to be identified and we would be in breach of the Data Protection Act 2018. We are therefore withholding all other data under Section 38(1)(b) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. This is in accordance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics which states that 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.
2. At NHS Borders there have been 95 employees who have had an absence from work owing to illness from Covid-19 that lasted for 12 weeks or more between 30 January 2020 and 11 March 2022
  - a. Of these absences, 21 employees work in Primary Care and;
  - b. Of these absences, 74 employees work in Secondary Care.

3.

- a. There have been no RIDDOR reports submitted by NHS Borders to HSE of accidents or incidents at work which have, or could have, led to the release or escape of Covid-19 since January 2020.
- b. Please see attached document which shows the number of reports submitted to HSE of a person at work (a worker) having been diagnosed as having Covid-19 attributed to an occupational exposure to Covid-19. **Please note that NHS Borders cannot determine for a fact that the diagnoses of Covid-19 was attributable to occupational exposure in the work-place due to the community acquired infection levels, rather these reports were made in an open and honest precautionary manner:**



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- c. There have been no RIDDOR reports submitted by NHS Borders to HSE of the death of a worker as a result of occupational exposure to Covid-19 (a work-related death due to exposure to a biological agent).

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 **147-22** 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.