

Freedom of Information request 509-22

Request

I am looking for information regarding the costs of removing and destroying prescription medicines that are returned unused/unopened to pharmacies. As such, can I request the following for the financial years 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21 2021/22 and 2022/23.

- 1.The amount (in terms of quantity) of prescription medicines that are returned unused/unopened to pharmacies?
- 2.The annual costs of removing and destroying prescription medicine that are returned unused/unopened to pharmacies?

Response

1. NHS Borders does not hold data on prescription medicines that are returned unused/unopened to pharmacies, therefore under Section 17 of the FOI(S)A 2002 this data cannot be provided. This data would only be available from the pharmacies themselves and as they are independent contractors you would need to contact each pharmacy separately. Under Section 15 of the FOI(S)A 2002 Duty to Provide Advice and Assistance please find a link to information on all NHS Borders Community Pharmacies – [Local services directory \(scot.nhs.uk\)](https://www.scot.nhs.uk/local-services-directory/)
2. The annual cost of removing and destroying prescription medicines that are returned unused to pharmacies is not collated, therefore under Section 17 of the FOI(S)A 2002 this cannot be provided. All pharmaceutical waste is collected from community pharmacies in large containers and can include Cytotoxic & Cytostatic waste including unused, partially used, or surplus medicines. No records are kept of the individual drugs contained within these containers. The costs of disposal of these containers are as per the national waste contract.

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 **509-22** 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.

