

Freedom of Information request 522-22

Request

I am looking for information regarding the number of patients who have died whilst on an NHS waiting list in your health board. Please provide the following information:

1. The total number of patients who have died whilst waiting on a waiting list for the last five years to present (date of request), broken down by year.
2. A breakdown, by number of weeks, of how long the deceased patient had been on a waiting list. If possible, also include the date they were, at the point just before death, expected or predicted to be seen, treated, or operated on.
3. The number of patients who have died whilst on a waiting list for the last five years to present (date of request), broken down by type by waiting list –
 - a. diagnostics
 - b. outpatients
 - c. inpatients
4. The number of patients who have died whilst on a waiting list for the last five years to present (date of request), broken down by type by specialty.

Response

1. The numbers of patients who died whilst on an NHS Borders waiting list are:

2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
85	112	147	221	220

2. The table below shows the breakdown, by number of weeks, of how long the deceased patient had been on a waiting list:

Number of Weeks on List	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
>= 4 wks	43	39	36	40	33
5-8 wks	24	29	27	20	23
9-12 wks	7	19	17	23	21
13-18 wks	6	9	16	20	23
19-26 wks	5	13	20	28	21
27-52 wks	0	3	20	53	52
53-102 wks	0	0	7	31	44

> 102 wks	0	0	4	6	3
TOTAL	85	112	147	221	220

Please note it is not possible to predict a date for which the patients may have been seen, treated or operated on, therefore, this information is not held, as defined in Section 17, Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

3. The numbers of patients who have died whilst on the given types of NHS Borders waiting lists are:

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Diagnostic	11	7	9	9	10
Outpatients	57	83	121	183	187
Inpatients	17	22	17	29	23

4. The numbers of patients who have died whilst on an NHS Borders waiting list, broken down by specialty are:

		2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Diagnostic	Colonoscopy	<5	<5	<5	<5	5
	Cystoscopy	0	0	<5	0	0
	Endoscopy	9	<5	6	8	5
Outpatients	Cardiology	<5	5	<5	13	9
	Clinical Oncology	<5	<5	5	6	<5
	Dermatology	<5	<5	11	29	26
	Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT)	<5	<5	7	9	7
	Endocrinology	0	<5	<5	<5	0
	Endocrinology & Diabetes	<5	<5	5	<5	8
	Gastroenterology	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5
	General Medicine	0	<5	0	0	<5
	General Surgery (excl Vascular, Maxillofacial)	<5	6	10	9	10
	Geriatric Medicine	<5	<5	<5	0	<5
	Gynaecology	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5
	Haematology	<5	0	0	0	<5
	Neurology	5	<5	6	6	8
	Ophthalmology	11	27	39	66	79
	Oral Surgery	<5	0	0	<5	<5
	Pain Management	0	0	0	<5	0
	Renal Medicine	<5	<5	<5	<5	0
	Respiratory Medicine	<5	8	8	11	13
	Rheumatology	<5	0	<5	0	0
	Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgery	5	5	<5	<5	<5
Urology	7	6	19	17	12	
Inpatients	Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT)	<5	0	0	0	0
	General Surgery (excl Vascular, Maxillofacial)	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5
	Gynaecology	0	0	0	<5	0
	Ophthalmology	7	10	10	16	8
	Oral Surgery	0	0	<5	0	0

Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgery	<5	5	0	6	<5
Urology	<5	<5	<5	<5	9

Please note: For data provided in 2022, this is up to 24 October 2022.

As the number of events in some areas are very small and 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](#).

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 **522-22** 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.