

Freedom of Information request 689-22

Request

1. I would like to request data on the number of patients in your Board who have been referred to hospitals or consultants in other parts of the UK (non-Scottish Boards) for treatment between 2015/16 and 2021/22. If available, I would also like to request the top five clinical indications/services for treatment each year. (Please include all patients in this request, irrespective of whether funded from yourselves or NSD).
2. I would also like to request data on the number of cases in your Board which have been referred to hospitals or consultants in other parts of the UK (non-Scottish Boards) for consultation (for example this could be to help confirm a diagnosis or engage with a specialised clinician around a specific case) between 2015/16 and 2021/22. If available, I would also like to request the top five clinical indications/services for consultation each year. (Please include all cases in this request, irrespective of whether funded from yourselves or NSD).

In both data requests, I would like numbers to be broken down by year. If values are small (below 5) and therefore disclosive, please aggregate.

Response

NHS Borders endeavours to promote where possible the provision of health care within locally available services or local commissioned services. This is to protect and sustain local services to the benefit of all Borders residents.

Due to the demographics of the area, NHS Borders has Service Level Agreements (SLA) in place with three English health trusts, Northumbria Healthcare, Cumbria Healthcare and NHS Newcastle. All agreements cover both emergency and elective activity for Borders patients to be treated within their facilities.

1. NHS Borders does not have one database that holds all patient activity for patients being treated out of area. The Board calculates that the work required to provide the information would exceed the amount prescribed for responding to requests made under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. Under Section 12(1) Excessive cost of compliance, of the Act, we are not obliged to provide you with the information.

However, under Section 15 Duty to Provide Advice and Assistance we are able to provide the number of patients seen (not referred) within the 3 main agreements of the above English Health providers. We are able to pull that information into a format from 2016/17 up to 2021/22.

The number of Day cases and Elective Inpatients seen at the 3 English trusts under the SLA's are:

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Cumbria	23	11	15	<5	11	6
Newcastle	92	77	72	62	26	74
Northumbria	44	34	16	19	8	12

The top five clinical indications/services for treatment each year are:

		2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Cumbria	Gastroenterology	15	6	<5	<5	<5	<5
	Gynaecology	<5	0	0	0	0	<5
	Clinical Oncology	0	<5	<5	0	0	0
	Ophthalmology	<5	0	0	<5	<5	0
	General Surgery	<5	<5	<5	0	<5	0
Newcastle	Clinical Immunology & Allergy	41	36	28	14	<5	29
	Ophthalmology	<5	7	<5	6	0	9
	Medical Oncology	7	<5	7	0	0	8
	Rheumatology	<5	6	6	6	5	5
	Urology	<5	<5	<5	8	<5	<5
Northumbria	Gastroenterology	0	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5
	Oral Surgery	<5	<5	0	<5	0	<5
	Clinical Oncology (previously Radiotherapy)	16	11	<5	0	<5	0
	Trauma & Orthopaedics	12	9	<5	9	<5	0
	Upper Gastrointestinal Surgery	<5	<5	5	0	0	0

2. NHS Borders does not have one database that holds all patient activity for patient consultations out of area. The Board calculates that the work required to provide the information would exceed the amount prescribed for responding to requests made under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. Under Section 12(1) Excessive cost of compliance, of the Act, we are not obliged to provide you with the information.

However, under Section 15 Duty to Provide Advice and Assistance we are able to provide the number of new outpatient appointments within the 3 main agreements of the above English Health providers. We are able to pull that information into a format from 2016/17 up to 2021/22.

The numbers of new outpatient appointments at the 3 English trusts under the SLA's are:

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Cumbria	68	56	35	24	0	27
Newcastle	81	79	91	87	40	42
Northumbria	<5	8	6	9	16	8

Notes:

- Assumption is that NEW referrals for outpatients only are 'referred' into these providers and not Follow up appointments (which would follow on from an initial appointment or treatment), diagnostics or drugs. This may include AHP appointments were not identified in the specialty description.
- The patient activity provided above is the number of contacts seen in each, this is not the number of patients. Some patients may be seen several times in one year.
- Patients accessing services in any of these 3 English trusts may not necessarily be referred into the specialty by NHS Borders health professionals. For example, they may be referred into English Trusts by their registered GP in England.

The top five clinical indications/services for consultations each year are:

		2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Cumbria	Ophthalmology	23	26	18	11	0	14
	ENT	8	8	7	<5	0	<5
	Cardiology	<5	5	<5	<5	0	<5
	Trauma & Orthopaedics	5	<5	<5	<5	0	<5
	Orthodontics	18	8	<5	<5	0	0
Newcastle	Ophthalmology	7	12	12	18	11	18
	Orthodontics	11	17	11	13	14	10
	Dermatology	6	<5	<5	5	0	<5
	ENT	15	11	12	16	7	<5
	Cardiology	13	10	9	15	0	0
Northumbria	Urology	0	<5	<5	<5	15	5
	Rheumatology	0	<5	0	0	0	<5
	Clinical Neuro-Physiology	<5	0	<5	<5	0	<5
	Gynaecology	<5	<5	<5	<5	0	0
	Gynaecological Oncology	0	0	0	<5	0	0

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 **689-22** 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.