

## Freedom of Information request 707-22

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### Request

1. How many inpatients have been referred for surgical treatment in the rest of the UK in each of the past five years, broken down by surgery type?
2. How many outpatients have been referred for surgical treatment in the rest of the UK in each of the past five years, broken down by surgery type?
3. What has been the cost of referring all patients for surgical treatment in the rest of the UK in each of the past five years?
4. How many inpatients have been referred for surgical treatment outwith the UK in each of the past five years, broken down by surgery type?
5. How many outpatients have been referred for surgical treatment outwith the UK in each of the past five years, broken down by surgery type?
6. What has been the cost of referring all patients for surgical treatment outwith the UK in each of the past five years?

### Clarification:

**“referred for surgical treatment in the rest of the UK” - By this do you mean in the rest of the UK being out with Scotland or the rest of the UK out with NHS Borders area which would include the rest of Scotland?”**

**“I mean outwith Scotland.”**

### 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.

NHS Borders does not have one database that holds all patient activity for patients being treated out of area. As the work required to provide the information requested for all patient activity 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, the information provided is reports of patients seen within the 3 main agreements of the above English Health providers.

We are able to pull the information requested from 2016/17 up to 2021/22 that is identified with a specialty description of 'Surgery' in its title, the exception is Trauma and Orthopaedics assuming surgery in this specialty to fit within this category. The reports DO NOT include other specialties where surgical treatment is possible such as Gynaecology as an example but not exclusively as there is no data field identifying a surgical intervention allowing us to break the details down.

The reports identify the number of patient contacts seen (not referred) in each 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 tables below have been redacted where the numbers are less <5 as per Section 38(2) of the FOI(S)A 2002.

Q1. Day case and Elective Inpatient 'Surgical' activity

Trust	Day case & Elective Inpatient - Surgical Specialties attended	Aggregated figure (Cumulative 2016/17 - 2021/22)
Cumbria	General Surgery	11
	Oral Surgery	<5
	Trauma & Orthopaedics	<5
Newcastle	THORACIC SURGERY	<5
	TRAUMA & ORTHOPAEDICS	8
	COLORECTAL SURGERY	<5
	BREAST SURGERY	<5
	UPPER GASTROINTESTINAL SURGERY	<5
	NEUROSURGERY	<5
	PLASTIC SURGERY	<5
	CARDIOTHORACIC SURGERY	<5
	Spinal Surgery Service	12
	MAXILLO-FACIAL SURGERY	<5
	GENERAL SURGERY	<5
	PAEDIATRIC TRAUMA AND ORTHOPAEDICS	<5
	VASCULAR SURGERY	<5
	ORAL SURGERY	<5
	PAEDIATRIC SURGERY	<5
Northumbria	ORAL SURGERY	9
	COLORECTAL SURGERY	7
	Spinal Surgery Service	<5
	BREAST SURGERY	<5
	TRAUMA & ORTHOPAEDICS	35
	UPPER GASTROINTESTINAL SURGERY	9
	PLASTIC SURGERY	5

Q2. 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.

Trust	NEW Outpatient Surgical Specialties attended	Aggregated figure (Cumulative 2016/17 - 2021/22)
Cumbria	Oral Surgery	<5
	Trauma & Orthopaedics	12
	Paediatric Trauma And Orthopaedics	6
	Vascular Surgery	<5
Newcastle	CARDIOTHORACIC SURGERY	<5
	PLASTIC SURGERY	36
	PAEDIATRIC TRAUMA AND ORTHOPAEDICS	<5
	NEUROSURGERY	<5
	MAXILLO-FACIAL SURGERY	<5
THORACIC SURGERY	<5	

	ORAL SURGERY	8
	PAEDIATRIC PLASTIC SURGERY	<5
Northumbria	TRAUMA & ORTHOPAEDICS	<5

Q3 Please find below the costs:

Trust	New outpatient, Daycase & Elective Inpatient - Surgical Specialties (Costs per case)	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Aggregated figure (Cumulative 2016/17 - 2021/22)
Cumbria	General Surgery	2,015	2,079	5,301		3,125		12,520
	Oral Surgery	235		639		1,005	129	2,008
	Paediatric Trauma And Orthopaedics	732	130		260		136	1,258
	Trauma & Orthopaedics	1,450	232	3,968	260		136	6,047
	Vascular Surgery	117	349					466
Newcastle	BREAST SURGERY						1,229	1,229
	CARDIOTHORACIC SURGERY			127	35,351			35,478
	COLORECTAL SURGERY	5,020				5,334	426	10,780
	GENERAL SURGERY	491						491
	MAXILLO-FACIAL SURGERY	780						780
	NEUROSURGERY			340	4,113		10,021	14,474
	ORAL SURGERY	462	282	1,778	578			3,100
	PAEDIATRIC PLASTIC SURGERY	129	248		172			549
	PAEDIATRIC SURGERY	1,097						1,097
	PAEDIATRIC TRAUMA AND ORTHOPAEDICS		119		9,858			9,977
	PLASTIC SURGERY	1,362	351	4,246	885	518		7,361
	Spinal Surgery Service	19,364	11,030	9,816				40,210
	THORACIC SURGERY			88			2,951	3,039
	TRAUMA & ORTHOPAEDICS	7,323		11,024	3,774		9,571	31,693
	UPPER GASTROINTESTINAL SURGERY						369	369
VASCULAR SURGERY		1,362					1,362	
Northumbria	BREAST SURGERY						2,498	2,498
	COLORECTAL SURGERY	980	527	483	1,107		554	3,651
	ORAL SURGERY	1,542	1,659		780		1,453	5,434
	PLASTIC SURGERY	1,993	524	856	512			3,885
	Spinal Surgery Service						630	630
	TRAUMA & ORTHOPAEDICS	36,947	17,949	529	6,900	12,177		74,503
	UPPER GASTROINTESTINAL SURGERY	3,157	800	3,643				7,600

TOTAL 'Surgical' cost (as outlined above) in 3 English SLA's	85,196	37,641	42,839	64,550	22,159	30,103	282,488
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The costs shown in the above table may not reflect the actual cost paid in year due to the terms of the SLA in place being different to the actual cost of treatment in year (ie.3 year average activity cost).

Q4 – Q6 NHS Borders has not sent any patients out with the UK for treatment.

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 **707-22** 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.