

Freedom of Information request 73-23

Request

I request the number of babies born with neonatal abstinence syndrome since 2007.

I request this data is expressed as an annual figure for each calendar year between 2007 and 2022 (inclusive).

Response

Babies generally are not born with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS) they are born at risk of it and then scored to assess for development of NAS and/or withdrawal of maternal medication. Babies at risk are Finnegan scored and they would be admitted to the post-natal ward for this, however, the score can be subjective. To treat a baby for NAS it has to reach certain criteria. The number of babies that have been Finnegan scored for development of NAS is not recorded digitally, therefore this information is not held, as defined in Section 17, Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. Also, prior to 2017 medical records were held in paper form and to extract this data would require a manual trawl of all patient records and the cost of carrying out this work would exceed the limit set in the Fees Regulations of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and under Section 12 we are not required to provide.

NHS Borders are able to provide the number of babies who were under observation for NAS – but not officially diagnosed:

Year	Babies under observation	Babies referred to Paediatrician
2017	<5	0
2018	<5	<5
2019	<5	0
2020	5	0
2021	5	0
2022	<5	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 **73-23** 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.