

Freedom of Information request 76-23

Request

1. In this health board, how many patients were directed or referred to hospitals or other healthcare settings (clinics/primary care centres etc) in another health board in the financial year 2022-23? Please also provide the data for the financial years 2021-22, 2020-21, 2019-20, and 2018-19 and please also break this down by procedure.
2. In this health board, how many patients were directed or referred to hospitals or other healthcare settings (clinics/primary care centres etc) in this health board from another health board in the financial year 2022-23? Please also provide the data for the financial years 2021-22, 2020-21, 2019-20, and 2018-19 and please also break this down by procedure.
3. In relation to Qs1-2, what was the average distance of the transfer in miles during the financial year 2022-23? Please also provide the data for the financial years 2021-22, 2020-21, 2019-20, and 2018-19. This would be the distance from the place of referral to the place of treatment e.g from GP in Grampian to hospital in Tayside.
4. In relation to Qs 1-2, what was the furthest transfer in miles during the financial year 2022-23? Please also provide the data for the financial years 2021-22, 2020-21, 2019-20, and 2018-19.
5. In relation to Question 4, please provide a reason why that transfer took place. For instance, was it because of a lack of beds?
6. In relation to Qs1-2 is there a cost associated with these transfers in 2022-23? Please also provide the data for the financial years 2021-22, 2020-21, 2019-20, and 2018-19.

Clarification

You refer to another health board – as only Scotland has health boards do you mean patients only seen in other NHS Scotland providers or patients receiving care from NHS Scotland customers?

Q1 & Q2 you refer to patients directed or referred to hospitals or other healthcare settings (clinics/primary care centres etc). Are you referring to ALL non-emergency treatment (Outpatient, Inpatient, Day case) or are you looking for only patients transferred from one hospital to another which is as per wording in Q6 'cost associated with these transfers' (transfers would only be patients being moved from one hospital to another only not all non-emergency)?

All non-emergency care.

My questions are regarding patients who were directed from one health board to another for treatment.

e.g If NHS borders referred a patient for cancer treatment in NHS Lothian etc.

Response

1. The numbers of NHS Borders patients who were treated within hospitals or other healthcare settings in another Health Board, by category, are:

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Nervous System	190	199	98	106	78
Endocrine System & Breast	65	87	77	111	22
Eye	105	103	91	219	239
Ear	59	51	35	36	39
Respiratory Tract	171	202	107	73	72
Mouth	52	57	28	21	29
Upper Digestive Tract	56	39	31	41	37
Lower Digestive Tract	27	25	9	17	9
Other Abdominal Organs - Principally Digestive	21	23	17	20	18
Heart	322	290	197	254	151
Arteries & Veins	171	136	65	78	75
Urinary	237	231	166	166	108
Male Genital Organs	24	18	11	9	9
Shoulder	9	10	6	16	6
Lower Female Genital Tract	<5	5	<5	<5	<5
Upper Female Genital Tract	20	17	15	<5	8
Skin	150	209	186	192	168
Soft Tissue	52	75	37	42	30
Diagnostic Imaging , Testing and Rehabilitation	61	39	45	53	32
Bones and Joints of Skull and Spine	65	61	31	57	31
Other Bones and Joints	220	173	78	164	217
Miscellaneous Operations	637	626	429	589	403

Please note, the 2022/23 data should be viewed as provisional.

2. The numbers of patients from another Health Board that were treated within NHS Borders hospitals or other healthcare settings, by category, are:

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Nervous System	<5	6	<5	<5	<5
Endocrine System & Breast	<5	<5	5	<5	0
Eye	55	41	10	27	14
Ear	5	<5	0	0	0
Respiratory Tract	<5	<5	<5	<5	0
Mouth	17	24	<5	5	<5
Upper Digestive Tract	0	<5	0	0	0
Lower Digestive Tract	<5	<5	<5	<5	0
Other Abdominal Organs - Principally Digestive	6	<5	<5	<5	<5
Arteries & Veins	<5	<5	<5	6	0
Urinary	5	20	11	5	<5
Male Genital Organs	<5	<5	0	0	<5
Shoulder	<5	<5	0	0	0
Lower Female Genital Tract	9	<5	<5	<5	<5
Upper Female Genital Tract	14	21	5	<5	<5
Skin	<5	<5	0	0	<5
Soft Tissue	19	12	<5	<5	8
Bones and Joints of Skull and Spine	<5	0	0	0	0
Other Bones and Joints	29	29	7	17	6
Miscellaneous Operations	59	79	34	83	47

Please note, the 2022/23 data should be viewed as provisional.

3. As NHS Borders do not record the mileage / distance of transfers, the average transfer distance is not identifiable. Therefore, this information is not held, as defined in Section 17, Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.
4. As NHS Borders do not record the mileage / distance of transfers, the furthest transfer distance is not identifiable. Therefore, this information is not held, as defined in Section 17, Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.
5. As NHS Borders do not record the mileage / distance of transfers, the furthest transfer is not identifiable and therefore the reason is not available. This information is not held, as defined in Section 17, Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.
6. NHS Borders are unable to provide cost data on 'transfers' as these costs are not identifiable within the activity information held, therefore under Section 17 of the FOI(S)A 2002 we cannot provide.

Please note that as NHS Borders is such a small Board the number patients undergoing specific procedures is very small, and to provide further details could allow individuals to be identified and we would be in breach of the Data Protection Act 2018. We are therefore withholding all other data (for instance name of procedure) under Section 38(2)(ii) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. This is also 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 **76-23** 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.