

Freedom of Information request 258-23

Request

1. In this health board, how many patients were transferred from hospitals in Scotland to hospitals and other settings in England and Wales for any procedure in the financial year 2022-23? Please also provide the data for the financial years 2021-22, 2020-21, 2019-20 and 2018-19.
2. In this health board, patients were transferred from hospitals in Scotland to hospitals and other settings in England and Wales, what was the average distance of the transfer during the financial year 2022-23? Please also provide the data for the financial years 2021-22, 2020-21, 2019-20 and 2018-19.
3. In this health board, where patients were transferred from hospitals in Scotland to hospitals and other settings in England and Wales, 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.
4. In this health board, where patients were transferred from hospitals in Scotland to hospitals and other settings in England and Wales, please provide a reason why that transfer took place. For instance, was it because of a lack of beds?
5. In this health board, what was the total cost associated with transferring patients from hospitals in Scotland to other settings in England and Wales in the financial year 2022-23? Please also provide the data for the financial years 2021-22, 2020-21, 2019-20 and 2018-19.

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 data provided identifies the number of inpatient contacts **seen (not referred)** in each year to each of the 3 main NHS England providers of care to NHS Borders residents.

1. The number of NHS Borders inpatients who were transferred to England and Wales for any procedure is:

	Cumbria	Newcastle	Northumbria
2018-19	<5	13	<5
2019-20	0	13	<5
2020-21	<5	<5	<5

2021-22	<5	10	<5
2022-23	<5	10	0
Total	6	47	7

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](#).

- NHS Borders do not record the mileage / distance of transfers, so the average transfer distance is not identifiable. Therefore, this information is not held, as defined in Section 17, Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.
- NHS Borders do not record the mileage / distance of transfers, so the furthest transfer distance is not identifiable. Therefore, this information is not held, as defined in Section 17, Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.
- The reason for a transfer taking place is not recorded in the activity information held electronically. The data may be held in a patient's record, but 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.
- The cost associated with transferring inpatients to other settings in England and Wales is:

	Cumbria	Newcastle	Northumbria
2018-19	£ 6,943	£ 32,296	£ 2,748
2019-20	£ -	£ 66,828	£ 4,280
2020-21	£ 1,519	£ 5,334	£ 3,718
2021-22	£ 3,328	£ 42,201	£ 1,170
2022-23	£ 1,827	£ 50,475	£ -
Total	£ 13,617	£ 197,134	£ 11,916

Notes on Tables:

- The activity information is the patients seen/treated by the Trusts as non-emergency inpatient care and not the number of referrals which is not identified or held.
- The cost of the activity information of patients seen/treated is the cost per case and may not be reflective of the actual costs paid to the Trusts in each year, this is depending on the Service Level agreement in place (ie. some may be 3-year average of activity cost).
- The patient activity provided above is the number of contacts seen in each year; this is not the number of patients. Some patients may be seen several times in one year.

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 **258-23** 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.