

## Freedom of Information request 354-23

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### Request

1. How many cases of Clostridium difficile had been diagnosed in hospitals in this health board in 2023? Please provide data for each year since 2018.
2. How many (if any) of these cases resulted in death? Please provide data for each year since 2018.
3. How many of these cases resulted in a person being hospitalised? Please provide data for each year since 2018.
4. How many cases of MRSA have been diagnosed in hospitals in this health board in 2023? Please provide data for each year since 2018.
5. How many (if any) of these cases resulted in death? Please provide data for each year since 2018.
6. How many of these cases resulted in a person being hospitalised? Please provide data for each year since 2018.
7. Please provide the data requested above for other bacterial infections. Please provide data for each year since 2018.

### Response

1. Information regarding case numbers of Clostridium Difficile is published by Antimicrobial Resistance and Healthcare Associated Infection (ARHAI) Scotland for all NHS Scotland Boards using consistent surveillance methodology and definitions. Therefore, please note under Section 25 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 this data is accessible elsewhere. For your information, please find a link to the most recent available data on the ARHAI Scotland website:

[Clostridioides difficile infection, Escherichia coli bacteraemia, Staphylococcus aureus bacteraemia and Surgical Site Infection in Scotland \(windows.net\)](#)

2. NHS Borders does not routinely collect outcome data on deaths in relation to healthcare associated infections, therefore, this information is not held, as defined in Section 17, Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

Under Section 15 of FOI(S)A 2002, Duty to Provide Advice and Assistance, National Records of Scotland (NRS) publishes death data relating to MRSA and C.diff in hospitals which may be of interest. However, this data does not clarify if infections were healthcare associated or acquired in the community. The links are below:

[Clostridium Difficile \(C.diff\) Deaths | National Records of Scotland \(nrscotland.gov.uk\)](#)

[MRSA Deaths | National Records of Scotland \(nrscotland.gov.uk\)](#)

3. This information is not 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.
4. The number of cases of MRSA have been diagnosed in NHS Borders hospitals is:

Year	New isolates of MRSA
2018	70
2019	58
2020	25
2021	20
2022	17
2023 (Jan-May)	15

Please note:

- This is **new isolates of MRSA only**, each patient is only counted once. Data begins from 2010, if the patient had MRSA prior to this, they would not be part of the de-duplication process and would be counted as a new case.
  - This data includes any sample taken from a patient while attending the BGH or Community Hospital sites, this includes outpatients and day cases.
  - The data does not discern whether the MRSA was community or healthcare associated and/or attributed to healthcare intervention at an NHS Borders site.
5. NHS Borders does not routinely collect outcome data on deaths in relation to healthcare associated infections, therefore, this information is not held, as defined in Section 17, Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.
  6. This information is not 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.
  7. 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.

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 **354-23** 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.