

Freedom of Information request 386-23

Request

1. In each year since 2018, including the current year to date, how many suicides have been recorded in psychiatric wards and psychiatric hospitals in this health board. Please also provide data for secure mental health units in your area.
2. In each year since 2018, including the current year to date, how many assaults have been recorded in psychiatric wards and psychiatric hospitals in this health board. Please also provide data for secure mental health units in your area.
3. In each year since 2018, including the current year to date, how many cases of sexual harassment, sexual assault and rape have been recorded in psychiatric wards and psychiatric hospitals in this health board. If possible, provide data for all three separately. Please also provide data for secure mental health units in your area.
4. In each year since 2018, including the current year to date, how many patients have escaped psychiatric wards and psychiatric hospitals in this health board. If possible, provide data for all three separately. Please also provide data for secure mental health units in your area.

Response

Please note: NHS Borders does not operate any secure units within the region, should a patient require that level or care, requests would be made to appropriate secure units seeking an available bed, the patient would then be transferred accordingly.

1. There have been no suicides recorded in NHS Borders Psychiatric wards and Psychiatric hospitals between 2018 and 2023.
2. The number of assaults recorded in NHS Borders Psychiatric wards and Psychiatric hospitals is:

2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
197	231	236	286	144	62

Please note, reports can be for physical or verbal assaults.

3. The NHS Borders recording system does not use the classifications "sexual harassment, sexual assault and rape" and on reviewing each report, it is not possible to determine which of these classifications would be appropriate for each incident. Therefore, this information is not held, as defined in Section 17, Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. However, The Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009 defines rape as 'penetration of the vagina, anus or mouth of another person by the penis without consent' and based on this definition, the review of the reports identified that there have been no recorded incidents of rape between 2018 and 2023.

Under Section 15, Duty to Provide Advice and Assistance, Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, please find below the number of reported incidents under the equivalent categories used by NHS Borders:

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Displays sexual behaviour	0	5	<5	<5	<5	0
Physical contact - sexual	0	<5	0	6	<5	0
Verbal - sexual content	0	<5	<5	0	<5	<5

4. NHS Borders does not refer to patients as escaping, all our wards are open units. However, patients are typically considered to have absconded when:

- they have left NHS Borders care without being discharged.
- as part of some patients care plans, they will have agreed time periods away from the hospital/ward. If the patient does not return at the agreed time, they will be assessed as having absconded.
- on occasions a patient may be detained under the mental health act, during this time they will be taken to a place of safety for assessment. Should the patient manage to leave the place of safety whilst detained they would be considered to have absconded.

The number of times a patient on Psychiatric wards and in Psychiatric hospitals has absconded is:

2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
51	35	55	39	20	11

Please note that as NHS Borders is such a small Board the number of event is very small, and to provide further details of these 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 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 **386-23** 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.