

Freedom of Information request 412-23

Request

1. Since the start of 2022 (please break down your answer in months), how many referrals from ENT or others have your audiology department received for children with a middle ear condition such as glue ear?
2. Since the start of 2022, how many of these cases (again by month) would have previously been considered for a surgical intervention such as grommets or a bone conduction implant?
3. Since the start of 2022, how many of the child referrals from ENT or from other sources had mild deafness and how many had moderate deafness?
4. Since the start of 2022, how many of the child referrals were provided with hearing aids and how many did not receive hearing aids?
5. What type of hearing aid was provided for these children? e.g. behind the ear hearing aid, bone anchored hearing aid or other type.
6. How many of these young people were referred to education services for deaf children?
7. Since the start of 2022, how many of the children and young people referred by ENT or others and seen by audiology were referred to speech and language therapy? Monthly returns if possible.
8. According to your Record of Deaf Children submission for 2023, how many deaf children do you have in your Health Board area (please break down into five groups: unilateral, then bilateral: mild, moderate, severe, and profound)?
9. How many of these children and young people on the Record of Deaf Children in 2023 were referred to education services since the start of 2022, and how many do education services know of because of previous referrals?
10. Which local authority educational services for deaf children has your Health board referred deaf children to during 2023?

Response

Please note Paediatric audiology services in NHS Borders has only been available since November 2022 and all answers provided relate to the time frame of November 2022 to May 2023

1. NHS Borders does not record this level of detail on the electronic system used for referrals. 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.
2. This request is invalid. The Freedom of information (Scotland) Act 2002 provides a right of access to the information we hold. It does not require the public authority to express opinions, make suppositions or draw conclusions.
3. There have been <5 patients with mild deafness and <5 with moderate hearing loss.

4. Between November 2022 and May 2023 there have been no children recorded as requiring hearing aids.
5. Not applicable.
6. Not applicable.
7. No children have been identified with Permanent Childhood Hearing Impairment (PCHI) in this timeframe, therefore none have been referred to speech and language therapy in this timeframe.
8. The number of deaf children recorded within the NHS Borders area is:

	Unilateral	Bilateral
Mild	<5	<5
Moderate	<5	5
Severe	<5	<5
Profound	<5	14
Total	7	25

9. No children have been identified with Permanent Childhood Hearing Impairment (PCHI) in this timeframe, therefore none have been referred to education services.
10. No children have been referred to Scottish Borders Council Education Services during 2023.

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 **412-23** 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.