

## Freedom of Information request 606-23

---

### Request

1. As it relates to present attempts by the Scottish Government to achieve sustainability and cost-saving targets, what is your district's official policy on returning used crutches?
2. What proportion of crutches have been returned by patients who no longer have a use for them?
3. How much has your district spent on crutches for the years 2021, 2022 and 2023 thus far (if possible)?
4. Has your district conducted an environmental impact assessment of the disposal of used crutches? If not, does it intend to do so?

### Response

1. All NHS Borders patients are advised that equipment, including used crutches, is loaned and is expected to be returned when no longer required. Equipment can be dropped off at a number of locations including Community Hospitals, GP Practices, the Physiotherapy Department at Borders General Hospital and the Community Equipment Store. If the person is unable to return the items, collection can be arranged.

2. Approximately 23.1% of crutches issued have been returned to NHS Borders.

3. The amount spent on crutches is:

2021	£ 8,981
2022	£10,777
2023 to June	£10,518

4. At this point, an environmental impact assessment of the disposal of used crutches has not been conducted. However, it has been identified as a potential cost saving activity as well as the environmental impact and this is a future piece of work that NHS Borders is considering.

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 **606-23** 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.