

5 October 2023

Freedom of Information request 679-23

Request

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I would like to request the following data:

The number of oral cancer referrals received by hospitals in your Trust between January 2017 and the most recent completed month that is available (most likely July or August 2023). I also request this data be presented as monthly figures.

Response

The following table shows the numbers of patients referred to NHS Borders Oral Surgery with an urgency of suspicion of Cancer for the period January 2017 to November 2021. After this point referrals are made directly to NHS Lothian who see these patients on behalf of NHS Borders. Therefore, the information from December 2021 to most recent is not held, as defined in Section 17, Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. However, please note, under Section 25 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, this data is accessible elsewhere. For your information, please find below a link to NHS Lothian:

[Freedom of Information \(FOI\) – NHS Lothian | Our Organisation](#)

Jan-17	<5
Feb-17	0
Mar-17	6
Apr-17	<5
May-17	10
Jun-17	<5
Jul-17	9
Aug-17	<5
Sep-17	<5
Oct-17	<5
Nov-17	8
Dec-17	8
Jan-18	7
Feb-18	9
Mar-18	5
Apr-18	5
May-18	9
Jun-18	9
Jul-18	<5
Aug-18	8
Sep-18	9
Oct-18	6
Nov-18	10

Dec-18	5
Jan-19	6
Feb-19	8
Mar-19	8
Apr-19	9
May-19	10
Jun-19	8
Jul-19	6
Aug-19	7
Sep-19	8
Oct-19	6
Nov-19	9
Dec-19	<5
Jan-20	6
Feb-20	9
Mar-20	13
Apr-20	<5
May-20	7
Jun-20	<5
Jul-20	6
Aug-20	7
Sep-20	<5
Oct-20	<5
Nov-20	6
Dec-20	11
Jan-21	<5
Feb-21	8
Mar-21	8
Apr-21	10
May-21	8
Jun-21	14
Jul-21	7
Aug-21	<5
Sep-21	<5
Oct-21	9
Nov-21	8

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 **679-23** 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.