

**Headquarters**  
Executive Office  
Gyle Square  
1 South Gyle Crescent  
EDINBURGH  
EH12 9EB  
Telephone 0131 275 6000  
Text Relay: 18001 0131 275 6000  
Fax: 0131 275 7530  
[www.nss.nhs.scot](http://www.nss.nhs.scot)



By email: [REDACTED]

Date 28<sup>th</sup> February 2025  
Your Ref FOI-2025-000044  
Our Ref FOI-2025-000044

Enquiries to [REDACTED]  
Email [nss.foi@nhs.scot](mailto:nss.foi@nhs.scot)

Dear [REDACTED],

**Freedom of Information Request Reference: FOI-2025-000044**

I refer to your request of 12<sup>th</sup> February 2025 under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA) in relation to the following:

1. What number of Healthcare Workers reported an incidence of exposure to blood and body fluids (BBF) in theatre during a total hip or knee replacement, by year since 2021?
2. The average cost to treat a Healthcare Worker with a reported incidence of exposure to blood and body fluids (BBF).
3. Please provide details of the number of working days lost due to musculoskeletal disorder injuries by members of staff working in theatres, by year since 2021. What is the cost of losing these workdays, by year since 2021?
4. What is the cost per tonne to dispose of clinical waste?
5. How many tonnes of clinical waste did the Trust send to incineration, by year since 2021?
6. Could you please provide data on reported instances where a polyp sample was taken during an endoscopy procedure but was not successfully transferred to the sample collection container? If possible, please include the number of such instances per year since 2021.
7. Could you please provide information on the average cost to readmit a patient following an instance where a polyp was taken during an endoscopy procedure but was not successfully transferred to the sample collection container ('lost polyp')?

I am writing to advise that following a search of our paper and electronic records, I have established that NHS National Services Scotland (NSS) only hold information in relation to questions 4 and 5, whereas for questions 1 to 3 and 6 to 7 NSS does not hold any information under [Section 17\(1\) of the Freedom of Information \(Scotland\) Act 2002](#).

It is important to note that NSS is not NHSScotland, but a Special Board within NHSScotland. NSS has no hospitals or GP practices under their control and do not provide clinical services to patients. NSS are responsible for supplying essential services to the rest of the NHS in Scotland including legal services, procurement, and blood transfusion.



Chair Keith Redpath  
Chief Executive Mary Morgan

*NHS National Services Scotland is the common name of the Common Services Agency for the Scottish Health Service.*

**1. What number of Healthcare Workers reported an incidence of exposure to blood and body fluids (BBF) in theatre during a total hip or knee replacement, by year since 2021?**

Under Section 17(1) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 NSS does not hold this information.

**2. The average cost to treat a Healthcare Worker with a reported incidence of exposure to blood and body fluids (BBF).**

Under Section 17(1) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 NSS does not hold this information.

**3. Please provide details of the number of working days lost due to musculoskeletal disorder injuries by members of staff working in theatres, by year since 2021. What is the cost of losing these workdays, by year since 2021?**

Under Section 17(1) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 NSS does not hold this information.

**4. What is the cost per tonne to dispose of clinical waste?**

Under [Section 33\(1\)\(b\) of FOISA for "Substantial Prejudice to Commercial Interests"](#) NSS cannot disclose this information as it is considered commercially sensitive.

NSS has concluded that disclosing this information could significantly harm the commercial interests of both NSS and our supplier. Given the small market for clinical waste disposal in the UK, releasing such details could provide competitors with insights into our supplier's commercial offerings, potentially affecting market competitiveness. Additionally, sharing this information could negatively impact NSS's ability to procure goods and services at the most advantageous prices.

As the Section33(1)(b) exemption is a "qualified" exemption, a "[Public Interest Test](#)" must be carried out in order to determine if the exemption can be applied.

FOISA does not define the public interest. It has been described elsewhere as "something which is of serious concern and benefit to the public", not merely something of individual interest. It has also been described as "something that is "in the interest of the public", not merely "of interest to the public." In other words, it serves the interests of the public.

NSS has recognised that there is always a strong public interest in Scottish public authorities acting in an open and transparent manner, however in this case NSS has determined that there is an even stronger public interest in NSS being able to procure goods and services at the best possible value to the public purse. Therefore, on this occasion NSS has decided that the public interest lies in the withholding of this information resulting in the application of the exemption.

**5. How many tonnes of clinical waste did the Trust send to incineration, by year since 2021?**

These figures relate solely to NSS.

| <b>FINANCIAL YEAR</b> | <b>2020/2021</b> | <b>2021/2022</b> | <b>2022/2023</b> | <b>2023/2024</b> |
|-----------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>TOTAL TONNAGE</b>  | 84               | 178              | 152              | 44               |

**6. Could you please provide data on reported instances where a polyp sample was taken during an endoscopy procedure but was not successfully transferred to the sample collection container? If possible, please include the number of such instances per year since 2021.**

Under Section 17(1) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 NSS does not hold this information.

**7. Could you please provide information on the average cost to readmit a patient following an instance where a polyp was taken during an endoscopy procedure but was not successfully transferred to the sample collection container ('lost polyp')?**

Under Section 17(1) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 NSS does not hold this information.

In order to obtain the information that you have requested we suggest that you contact the other NHSScotland Regional Health Boards by using the email addresses listed in the table below, as under the terms of FOISA we are unable to transfer this request on your behalf.

| <b>ORGANISATION</b>         | <b>FREEDOM OF INFORMATION TEAM</b>   |
|-----------------------------|--|
| NHS Ayrshire & Arran        | <a href="mailto:foi@aapct.scot.nhs.uk">foi@aapct.scot.nhs.uk</a>                           |
| NHS Borders                 | <a href="mailto:foi.enquiries@borders.scot.nhs.uk">foi.enquiries@borders.scot.nhs.uk</a>   |
| NHS Dumfries & Galloway     | <a href="mailto:dg.feedback2@nhs.scot">dg.feedback2@nhs.scot</a>                           |
| NHS Fife                    | <a href="mailto:fife.foirequestfife@nhs.scot">fife.foirequestfife@nhs.scot</a>             |
| NHS Forth Valley            | <a href="mailto:fv.freedomofinformation@nhs.scot">fv.freedomofinformation@nhs.scot</a>     |
| NHS Grampian                | <a href="mailto:gram.foi@nhs.scot">gram.foi@nhs.scot</a>                                   |
| NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde | <a href="mailto:foi@ggc.scot.nhs.uk">foi@ggc.scot.nhs.uk</a>                               |
| NHS Highland                | <a href="mailto:nhsh.foirequestshighland@nhs.scot">nhsh.foirequestshighland@nhs.scot</a>   |
| NHS Lanarkshire             | <a href="mailto:foi@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk">foi@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk</a>               |
| NHS Lothian                 | <a href="mailto:loth.freedomofinformation@nhs.scot">loth.freedomofinformation@nhs.scot</a> |
| NHS Orkney                  | <a href="mailto:ORK.FOIREquests@nhs.scot">ORK.FOIREquests@nhs.scot</a>                     |
| NHS Shetland                | <a href="mailto:shet.foi@nhs.scot">shet.foi@nhs.scot</a>                                   |
| NHS Tayside                 | <a href="mailto:tay.foisa@nhs.scot">tay.foisa@nhs.scot</a>                                 |
| NHS Western Isles           | <a href="mailto:wi.infogov-wihb@nhs.scot">wi.infogov-wihb@nhs.scot</a>                     |

If you are unhappy with any aspect of how we have dealt with your request, you can make representations to us asking us to review the handling of your request. Please write to the Associate Director Governance & Board Services using the email address [nss.foi@nhs.scot](mailto:nss.foi@nhs.scot) within 40 working days of the date of this correspondence.

If after a review you are still unhappy, you also have the right to apply to the Scottish Information Commissioner, who can be contacted at Kinburn Castle, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9DS, or via their [online Appeal form](#).

