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Date: 16 April 2024
Our ref: K: FOI/Ref: 2023-000444
Email: nss.pcf-foi@nhs.scot

Dear [REDACTED]

Freedom of Information Reference: FOI-2023-000444 – Decontamination.

I refer to your freedom of information request that we received on 29 November 2023. I can advise you that we have now completed the search of our records and can provide you with the following information:

Further to the reported problems with NHS Lothian's Hospital Sterilisation and Decontamination Unit earlier this year, confirmation of whether the strategy for decontamination arrangements across the health service has been reviewed at a national level and the outcome of that review.

The strategy for decontamination arrangements across NHS Scotland are in the process of being reviewed. Central Decontamination Units (CDUs) operated by Health Boards are currently being reviewed through a national Decontamination Collaborative Programme. The Programme aims are:

- Effective contingency arrangements
- Increased Resilience
- Improved Sustainability
- Expansion in Capacity
- Workforce Harmonisation
- Process Harmonisation

The Programme has identified a short, medium and long terms actions. These are currently being developed for further discussion with the Scottish Government.

The number of times in each of the past three years that health boards have had to use neighbouring NHS decontamination facilities and alternative facilities, such as the sterilisation service in Liverpool.

Under Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Scotland Act, 2002 (FOISA) an organisation does not have to provide the requested information if it does not hold that information. NHS National Services Scotland (NSS) does not hold this information. You may wish to contact the individual health boards who may be able to provide you with the requested information, addresses are as follows:



Headquarters

Gyle Square, 1 South Gyle Crescent, EDINBURGH EH12 9EB

Chairperson Keith Redpath
Chief Executive Mary Morgan

Ayrshire and Arran - foi@aapct.scot.nhs.uk
Borders – foi.enquiries@borders.scot.nhs.uk
Dumfries and Galloway – dg.feedback2@nhs.scot
Fife – fife.foirequestfife@nhs.scot
Forth Valley – fv.freedomofinformation@nhs.scot
Grampian – gram.foi@nhs.scot
Greater Glasgow & Clyde – foi@ggc.scot.nhs.uk
Highland – nhsh.foirequestshighland@nhs.scot
Lanarkshire – foi@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk
Lothian – foi@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk
Orkney – ORK.FOIrequests@nhs.scot
Shetland – shet.foi@nhs.scot
Tayside – tay.informationgovernance@nhs.scot
Western Isles – wi.foi-requests@nhs.scot
NHS24 – foi@nhs24.scot.nhs.uk
NHS National Waiting Times Centre – FOI@gjnh.scot.nhs.uk
Scottish Ambulance Service – sas.foi@nhs.scot
Healthcare improvement Scotland - his.foi@nhs.scot
Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland - mwc.enquiries@nhs.scot
NHS Education for Scotland - foidp@nes.scot.nhs.uk
Public Health Scotland - PHS.FOI@phs.scot
State Hospital Board for Scotland - tsh.info@nhs.scot

The cost of using a private provider (or providers) for decontamination and sterilisation services.

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The number of operations which have had to be delayed because of capacity challenges or other issues arising with sterilisation units in each of the past three years, broken down by health board.

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A breakdown of the staff shortages affecting NHS sterilisation units and the action NHS Scotland is taking to address these shortages.

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I trust you will find the information of assistance and if you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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

Head of Information and Cyber Security
Digital and Security
NHS National Services Scotland
Headquarters
Gyle Square
1 South Gyle Crescent
Edinburgh
EH12 9EB

or at the email address 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 application form](#).

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me at the above address.

Yours sincerely

