

Date: 21 July 2025  
Our ref: K: FOI/Ref: 2025-000186  
Email: [NSS.DevServicesFOI@nhs.scot](mailto:NSS.DevServicesFOI@nhs.scot)

Dear [REDACTED]

**Freedom of Information Reference: FOI-2025-000186 COVID-19 & PPE.**

I refer to your freedom of information request that we received on 23 June 2025 requesting the following information.

**Under FOISA legislation, could you please provide me the following information, including copies where appropriate:**

- 1. Please provide any notes, decisions, or literature reviews (including the rationale) with regards to Covid infection control protocols, from years 2020-2025.**
- 2. Please provide your total spend on personal protective equipment for staff for the last five financial years (19/20,20/21,21/22,22/23,23/24).**
- 3. Please outline your current protocol for staff if and/or when a patient in hospital contracts Covid-19 while receiving healthcare while in an NHS hospital.**
- 4. "Patients and visitors will no longer be asked to wear face masks unless there is a risk of transmission from an individual who presents with respiratory symptoms." This is a quote from NHS Lanarkshire's website. Please provide any notes, decisions or literature reviews regarding asymptomatic transmission of Covid or other viral diseases.**
- 5. How does this body integrate current scientific findings about the nature of airborne diseases with its protocol regarding infection control? Please provide any notes, decisions or literature reviews (including the rationale) with regards to this.**
- 6. Since 2021, has the NHS commissioned or carried out literature reviews on the nature of airborne transmission of covid? Please provide examples if so.**
- 7. How does this body evaluate which medical mask (PPE) is best to use in healthcare settings? Please provide any notes or decisions, literature reviews (including the rationale) with regards to this.**
- 8. Since 2021, has this body commissioned or carried out a literature review on the effectiveness of some medical face mask models over others? Please provide any notes or decisions, literature reviews (including the rationale) with regards to this.**
- 9. Since 2021, have there been any internal concerns raised or literature reviews carried out about recurring covid infections in children? Could you provide a number of how many and an example of one of these internal concerns. In the case of literature reviews, could you provide documents of these too if they exist.**



Chair Keith Redpath  
Chief Executive Mary Morgan

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Common Services Agency for the Scottish Health Service*

**10. Since 2021, have there been any internal concerns raised or literature reviews carried out about recurring covid infections in the wider population? Could you provide a number of how many and documents of these internal concerns and/or literature reviews.**

We have now completed the search of our records and can provide you with the following information:

**1. Please provide any notes, decisions, or literature reviews (including the rationale) with regards to Covid infection control protocols, from years 2020-2025.**

Antimicrobial Resistance and Healthcare Associated Infection (ARHAI) Scotland part of NHS National Services Scotland (NSS) produced a suite of rapid literature reviews and SBARs (situation, background, assessment, recommendations) to support the infection prevention and control response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Scotland. These rapid reviews can be found here: [National Infection Prevention and Control Manual: COVID-19 NIPCM Archives](#). Please note these are no longer being updated and have been archived.

**2. Please provide your total spend on personal protective equipment for staff for the last five financial years (19/20,20/21,21/22,22/23,23/24).**

**Clarification: Total spend on face masks for NHSScotland staff.**

Please find attached Appendix 1 – PPE spend, detailing the total spent on face masks for NHSScotland staff in the last five fiscal years.

**3. Please outline your current protocol for staff if and/or when a patient in hospital contracts Covid-19 while receiving healthcare while in an NHS hospital.**

NHS National Services Scotland (NSS) current protocol can be found here: [National Infection Prevention and Control Manual: Chapter 2 - Transmission Based Precautions \(TBPs\)](#).

**4. "Patients and visitors will no longer be asked to wear face masks unless there is a risk of transmission from an individual who presents with respiratory symptoms." This is a quote from NHS Lanarkshire's website. Please provide any notes, decisions or literature reviews regarding asymptomatic transmission of Covid or other viral diseases.**

NSS cannot comment on a quote from NHS Lanarkshire's website, we would suggest contacting NHS Lanarkshire at [foi@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:foi@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk) if you wish to obtain information in relation to the above quote. We can provide you with the following link to an NSS literature review: [National Infection Prevention and Control Manual: Transmission Based Precautions definitions](#).

**5. How does this body integrate current scientific findings about the nature of airborne diseases with its protocol regarding infection control? Please provide any notes, decisions or literature reviews (including the rationale) with regards to this.**

Please see the following Considered Judgement Forms: [Considered judgement form Part A](#) and the following NIPCM methodology: [National Infection Prevention and Control Manual: Methodology](#).

In addition please see the following [National Infection Prevention and Control Manual: Chapter 2 - Transmission Based Precautions \(TBPs\)](#).



Chair  
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**6. Since 2021, has the NHS commissioned or carried out literature reviews on the nature of airborne transmission of covid? Please provide examples if so.**

Please see the following National Infection Prevention and Control Manual: Transmission Based Precautions definitions and in addition the National Infection Prevention and Control Manual: Chapter 2 - Transmission Based Precautions (TBPs).

**7. How does this body evaluate which medical mask (PPE) is best to use in healthcare settings? Please provide any notes or decisions, literature reviews (including the rationale) with regards to this.**

Please see the following literature reviews carried out by NSS in regards to PPE: National Infection Prevention and Control Manual: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

**8. Since 2021, has this body commissioned or carried out a literature review on the effectiveness of some medical face mask models over others? Please provide any notes or decisions, literature reviews (including the rationale) with regards to this.**

Please see the following literature reviews carried out by NSS in regards to PPE: National Infection Prevention and Control Manual: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

**9. Since 2021, have there been any internal concerns raised or literature reviews carried out about recurring covid infections in children? Could you provide a number of how many and an example of one of these internal concerns. In the case of literature reviews, could you provide documents of these too if they exist.**

Under Section 17(1) of the Freedom of Information Scotland Act, 2002 (FOISA) an organisation does not have to provide the information if it does not hold it. NSS does not hold the requested information. We would advise contacting Public Health Scotland (PHS) at [Phs.foi@phs.scot](mailto:Phs.foi@phs.scot) who may be able to provide this.

**10. Since 2021, have there been any internal concerns raised or literature reviews carried out about recurring covid infections in the wider population? Could you provide a number of how many and documents of these internal concerns and/or literature reviews.**

Under Section 17(1) of the FOISA an organisation does not have to provide the information if it does not hold it. NSS does not hold the requested information. We would advise contacting PHS at [Phs.foi@phs.scot](mailto:Phs.foi@phs.scot) who may be able to provide this.

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 Associate Director Governance and Board Services (Board Secretary) at the email address [nss.foi@nhs.scot](mailto:nss.foi@nhs.scot) within 40 working days of the date of this correspondence.



Chair  
Chief Executive

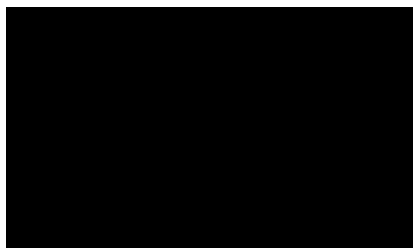
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If after a review you are still unhappy, you also have the right to apply to the Scottish Information Commissioner, who can be contacted at Kinburn Castle, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9DS, or via their [online application form](#).

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

Yours sincerely,



Chair                      Keith Redpath  
Chief Executive        Mary Morgan

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