

Date: 27 October 2025
Our ref: K: FOI/Ref: 2025-3139
Email: NSS.DevServicesFOI@nhs.scot

Freedom of Information Reference: FOI-2025-3139 - Spine Decompression Surgery Interval Referrals.

I refer to your freedom of information request that we received on 02 October 2025 requesting the following information.

Please see below email trail and attached correspondence between Wings for Life and Scottish Government, regarding our concerns acute spinal cord injured patients in Scotland are receiving substandard surgical care in the crucial hours and days after their injury.

As you can gather, we have been referred to you under the Freedom of Information Scotland Act (FOISA) 2022 as we seek to understand the following:

- The average 'injury to spine decompression surgery interval' (or be differentiated from general life saving surgery)
- The number of secondary referrals (%) necessary in Scotland.

Please can you respond on these two points or let me know if you have any questions which require further clarification.

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

- The average 'injury to spine, decompression surgery interval' (or be differentiated from general life saving surgery)

Under section 17 of the Freedom of Information Scotland Act, 2002 (FOISA) an organisation does not have to provide that information if it does not hold it. NHS National Services Scotland (NSS) does not hold data relating to the average interval between spinal injury and decompression surgery. NSS does not hold any information relating to this as it is held locally with the territorial Health Boards (HBs). You may wish to contact them using the details provided below.

- The number of secondary referrals (%) necessary in Scotland.

Under section 17 of FOISA an organisation does not have to provide that information if it does not hold it. NSS does not hold any information pertaining to the number of secondary referrals necessary in Scotland for injury to spine decompression surgery. NSS does not hold any information relating to this as it is also held locally with the territorial HBs. You may wish to contact them using the details provided below:

NHS Ayrshire & Arran - foi@aapct.scot.nhs.uk
NHS Borders - foi.enquiries@borders.scot.nhs.uk
NHS Dumfries & Galloway - dg.feedback2@nhs.scot



Chair Keith Redpath
Chief Executive Mary Morgan

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Common Services Agency for the Scottish Health Service*

NHS Fife - fife.foirequestfife@nhs.scot
NHS Forth Valley - fv.freedomofinformation@nhs.scot
NHS Grampian - gram.foi@nhs.scot
NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde - foi@ggc.scot.nhs.uk
NHS Highland - nhsh.foirequestshighland@nhs.scot
NHS Lanarkshire - foi@lanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk
NHS Lothian - loth.freedomofinformation@nhs.scot
NHS Orkney - ORK.FOIrequests@nhs.scot
NHS Shetland - shet.foi@nhs.scot
NHS Tayside - tay.foisa@nhs.scot
NHS Western Isles - wi.infogov-wihb@nhs.scot
NHS Golden Jubilee - FOI@gjnh.scot.nhs.uk
Healthcare Improvement Scotland - His.foi@nhs.scot
NHS Education for Scotland - nes.foi@nhs.scot
NHS Golden Jubilee - FOI@nwtc.scot.nhs.uk
NHS24 - FOI@nhs24.scot.nhs.uk
Public Health Scotland - Phs.foi@phs.scot
The Scottish Ambulance Service - sas.foi@nhs.scot
The State Hospital - TSH.FOI-Mailbox@nhs.scot

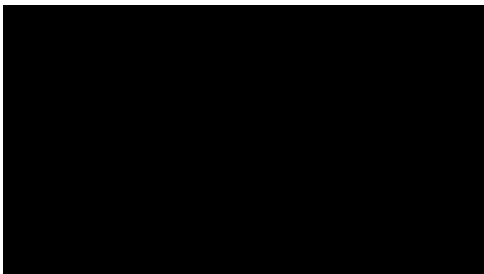
I trust you will find the information of assistance and if you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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 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,



Chair
Chief Executive

Keith Redpath
Mary Morgan

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