

Procurement, Commissioning & Facilities
NHS National Services Scotland
National Distribution Centre
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Date: 16 April 2024
Our ref: K: FOI/Ref: 2023-000214
Email: nss.pcf-foi@nhs.scot

Dear [REDACTED]

Freedom of Information Reference: FOI-2023-000214 – Crutches query

I refer to your freedom of information request that we received on 22 June 2023. I can advise you that we have now completed the search of our records and can provide you with the following information:

I would like to obtain an FOI with regards to the following queries:

As it relates to present attempts by the Scottish Government to achieve sustainability and cost-saving targets, what is NHS Scotland's official policy on returning used crutches?

What proportion of crutches have been returned by patients who no longer have a use for them (broken down by district if possible)?

How much has NHS Scotland spent on crutches for the past two years (broken down by each year if possible for 2021, 2022 and 2023 thus far)?

Have NHS Scotland conducted an environmental impact assessment of the disposal of used crutches? If not, does it intend to do so?

I can advise you that we have now completed the search of our records and can provide you with the following information:

As it relates to present attempts by the Scottish Government to achieve sustainability and cost-saving targets, what is NHS Scotland's official policy on returning used crutches?

Under Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Scotland Act, 2002 (FOISA) an organisation does not have to provide any information if it does not hold that information. The National Procurement (NP) team within NHS National Services Scotland (NSS) does not manage a national policy for returning used crutches. We are aware that local health boards and local authorities may manage local return and refurbishments initiatives, further information would need to be requested directly from each health board using the email addresses listed below.



Headquarters

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

Chairperson Keith Redpath
Chief Executive Mary Morgan

What proportion of crutches have been returned by patients who no longer have a use for them (broken down by district if possible)?

Under Section 17 of the FOISA an organisation does not have to provide any information if it does not hold that information. The NP team within NSS does not hold any information on the proportion of crutches that have been returned by patients who no longer have a use for them. Further information would need to be requested directly from each health board using the email addresses listed below.

How much has NHS Scotland spent on crutches for the past two years (broken down by each year if possible for 2021, 2022 and 2023 thus far)?

Under Section 17 of the FOISA an organisation does not have to provide that information if it does not hold that information. NSS NP cannot provide figures for all of NHS Scotland as the individual health boards may procure products from local authorities, which NP does not hold any data on. What we can provide you with is the spend figures for products that are shipped out via the National Distribution Centre (NDC) in Larkhall, Scotland:

- May 2020 to May 2021 £246,358 including VAT
- May 2021 to May 2022 £186,545 including VAT
- May 2022 to May 2023 £411,962 including VAT

Have NHS Scotland conducted an environmental impact assessment of the disposal of used crutches? If not, does it intend to do so?

Under Section 17 of the FOISA an organisation does not have to provide that information if it does not hold that information. NSS NP does not hold any information about Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) conducted on the disposal of used crutches. NSS NP does not intend to conduct any such EIAs as it is down to the individual health boards to manage the disposal and recycling of crutches. If you wish to contact the individual health boards to find out further information, please use the following email addresses:

Ayrshire and Arran -	foi@aapct.scot.nhs.uk
Borders –	foi.enquiries@borders.scot.nhs.uk
Dumfries and Galloway –	dq.feedback@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

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

