

7 May 2025

Freedom of Information request 28-2526

Request

1. Since the legislation was legally commenced on 1 October 2023, how has NHS Borders paid due regard to community benefit in non-emergency patient contracts, and the extent to which such contracts will improve economic, social or environmental wellbeing, to comply with its duty under Part 10, Section 120 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019?
2. Since the legislation was legally commenced on 1 October 2023, how has NHS Borders worked with bodies which provide community transport services in its area in providing non-emergency patient transport services to comply with its duty under Part 10, Section 121, Subsection 1 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019?
3. Since the legislation was legally commenced on 1 October 2023, how has NHS Borders reported on:
 - a. the steps it has taken to comply with these duties under the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019;
 - b. the extent to which non-emergency patient transport services in its area have been effective and cost-effective; and,
 - c. further action it proposes to take to comply with these duties?
4. In each of the last 5 years, how much did NHS Borders spend on non-emergency patient transport?
5. In each of the last 5 years, how much did NHS Borders spend with private taxi firms on non-emergency patient transport?
6. In each of the last 5 years, how much did NHS Borders spend with non-profit organisations which provide community transport services on non-emergency patient transport?

Response

1. NHS Borders has worked with Red Cross, Royal Voluntary Service (RVS) and Blood bikes: opportunities to work with these organisations are continuously reviewed.
2. NHS Borders has used Blood Bikes consistently. NHS Borders has previously used RVS, however they changed the pricing model for NHS Borders and at that time were unable to offer flexibility to this model. In addition, they were unable to offer flexibility on timings. As NHS Borders could not sign the agreed Terms and Conditions RVS terminated the contract.
3. Since the legislation was legally commenced on 1 October 2023:
 - a. NHS Borders has considered every opportunity whilst ensuring the service meets the needs of patients and delivers value for money.
 - b. NHS Borders will be reviewing all transport services in the near future – a date has not yet been set.
 - c. NHS Borders will be reviewing all transport services in the near future – a date has not yet been set.

4. The NHS Borders spend on non-emergency patient transport is:

Year	Amount *
2020/21	£ 454,427.10
2021/22	£ 892,899.42
2022/23	£ 1,013,163.35
2023/24	£ 1,192,161.22
2024/25	£ 1,114,369.17

5. The NHS Borders spend with private taxi firms on non-emergency patient transport is:

Year	Amount *
2020/21	£ 189,173.56
2021/22	£ 243,299.13
2022/23	£ 389,096.45
2023/24	£ 393,583.24
2024/25	£ 263,211.54

6. The NHS Borders spend with non-profit organisations which provide community transport services on non-emergency patient transport is:

Year	Total
2020/21	£ -
2021/22	£ -
2022/23	£ 4,824.00
2023/24	£ 18,292.93
2024/25	£ 8,112.24

Note:

* figures in Q4 & 5 above include all taxi costs - NHS Borders uses taxis for a variety of reasons, including patient transport, transfer of equipment, urgent transportation of laboratory samples, x-rays from Radiology and patient case notes. The information contained on invoices from taxi companies does not distinguish the reason or number of journeys for transportation. Therefore, this information is not held, as defined in Section 17, Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

If you are not satisfied with the way your request has been handled or the decision given, you may ask NHS Borders to review its actions and the decision. If you would like to request a review please apply in writing to, Freedom of Information Review, NHS Borders, Education Centre, Borders General Hospital, Melrose, TD6 9BD or foi.enquiries@borders.scot.nhs.uk.

The request for a review should include your name and address for correspondence, the request for information to which the request relates and the issue which you wish to be reviewed. Please state the reference number **28-2526** on this request. Your request should be made within 40 working days from receipt of this letter.

If following this review, you remain dissatisfied with the outcome, you may appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner and request an investigation of your complaint. Your request to the Scottish Information Commissioner should be in writing (or other permanent form), stating your name and an address for correspondence. You should provide the details of the request and your reasons for dissatisfaction with both the original response by NHS Borders and your reasons for dissatisfaction with the outcome of the internal review. Your application for an investigation by the Scottish Information Commissioner must be made within six months of your receipt of the response with which you are dissatisfied. The address for the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner is, Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, Fife.