

## Corporate Administration

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**Date** 27 September 2019  
**Your Ref**  
**Our Ref** FOI 15337  
**Direct Line** 0141 201 4460  
**Email** foi@ggc.scot.nhs.uk  
**Contact**

Dear

### REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2002

Thank you for your request which you forwarded to us on 2 September 2019 following your telephone call. We are unable to explain why we did not receive your earlier emails which were sent to the correct email address. We have tested the system ourselves and have not been made aware of anyone else experiencing this difficulty, and can only apologise for the inconvenience you were caused.

You asked us for information in relation to the Sandyford Young People's Gender Identity Clinic:

***“Could you please supply the child referral numbers for each of the years from 2013 to 2018?”***

***Please also provide the following breakdown of the figures for each year:***

- number of males and females, by birth sex***
- age range***
- numbers from each health board***
- numbers by referral source, eg. self/GP/internal/sexual health/LGBT Youth/CAHMS/Others***
- numbers prescribed Gonadotropin-Releasing Hormone agonist (GnRHa) puberty blockers, and age when first prescribed.”***

We are treating your request under our procedures for responding to requests for information under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. The information that we are able to provide in response to your request is given below, underneath each of your questions.

***Could you please supply the child referral numbers for each of the years from 2013 to 2018?***

Our response is provided in Table 1

Calendar Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Number of under-18s referred to gender identity service	37	67	136	222	218	298

Table 1: Nos. of referrals, by year

***Please also provide the following breakdown of the figures for each year:  
number of males and females, by birth sex***

We do not have this recorded in a central database. In order to provide this information it would require a review of individual patient histories. We estimate that the cost of providing this information would exceed the cost threshold set out in Fees Regulations (currently £600). Section 12 of FOISA provides that a public authority is not obliged to comply with a request where it calculates that the cost of complying would exceed this limit. On this occasion we are therefore unable to provide the information for this part of your request. However it may be that a narrower or more defined request would allow us to provide some information within the cost limits, and I would therefore suggested that you make further contact in this respect, so that we can provide appropriate advice and assistance to identify what may be feasible, for example by providing the information for a shorter period only.

***age range***

We do not have this information in an accessible format for the period 2013 to 2016 as this was not recorded on our waiting lists. As described above, to access this information would require a review of individual patient histories. We have provided the information for 2017 and 2018 in table 2, shown below.

<b>Age</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
4 – 10 years old	18	33
11 – 12 years old	21	34
13 -14 years old	83	103
15 – 16 years old	94	127
17 years old	<5	<5

Table 2: Nos. of patients by age referred to the clinic

Please note where there are small numbers these are presented as <5 to protect patient identification. This is due to the possibility that disclosure of actual figures would pose a risk that an individual or individuals could be identified from that information. This would be contrary to, and would put NHSGGC in breach of, Data Protection principles. In assessing this, we have followed guidelines issued by NHS NSS Information Services Division. A key principle of the guidelines discourages presenting numbers which are less than 5.

We therefore decline to provide the actual figures on the basis that this is personal information. Section 38 of FOISA provides that information is exempt information if it constitutes personal information and that to disclose this information would contravene one or more of the data protection principles. The exemptions within FOISA that we have relied upon to withhold this information are section 38(1)(b) read in conjunction with section 38(2)(a)(i) of FOISA. This is an absolute exemption which means that if information is withheld under this exemption, we are not required to consider whether it is in the public interest to withhold it.

***numbers from each health board***

Please note that information prior to 2015 is not recorded. Again we refer you to our explanation of the need to review case notes. The available information is shown in table 3 below.

<b>Health Board</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
<b>Greater Glasgow and Clyde</b>	24	49	63	84
<b>Lothian</b>	32	38	43	47
<b>Fife</b>	5	14	18	18
<b>Forth Valley</b>	9	17	14	19
<b>Grampian</b>	10	18	6	18
<b>Tayside</b>	14	18	15	19

<b>Dumfries and Galloway</b>	6	<5	10	10
<b>Borders</b>	7	5	<5	6
<b>Ayrshire and Arran</b>	10	21	14	24
<b>Lanarkshire</b>	6	25	18	24
<b>Western Isles</b>	2	0	<2	<2
<b>Highland and Islands</b>	10	11	13	19

Table 3: Nos. of patients referred, by referring Health Board

***numbers by referral source, eg. self/GP/internal/sexual health/LGBT Youth/CAHMS/Others***

Please note that information prior to 2015 is not recorded. Again we refer you to our explanation of the need to review case notes. The available information is shown in table 4 below.

<b>Referral Source</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
<b>Self</b>	49	87	88	133
<b>CAMHS</b>	32	28	27	29
<b>LGBT</b>	5	<5	<5	<5
<b>Internal</b>	<5	<5	<5	9
<b>GP</b>	40	82	76	102
<b>Others</b>	36	21	21	16

Table 4: Nos. of patients referred, by referral source

***numbers prescribed Gonadotropin-Releasing Hormone agonist (GnRHa) puberty blockers, and age when first prescribed.***

Once again we are unable to provide information in response to this question. We have been advised by our colleagues at Sandyford and also in Pharmacy that this information in relation to the Sandyford Young People's Gender Identity Clinic is not recorded in a central database and so the only way to access it would be by reviewing all patients' case notes. We refer you to our response to your question 1.

Young people with gender dysmorphia undergo a comprehensive psychological and psychiatric assessment and when it is deemed appropriate will be prescribed puberty blockers.

I hope that this is helpful. If you are not satisfied with our response to your request, you have a right to request a review of this decision within 40 working days of receiving this response. The attached note describes our review procedure. Your request for review must be in permanent form and should state:

- That you are asking for a review of this decision and
- Why you are unhappy with the response you have received.

If you wish us to carry out a review, please complete the form enclosed and return it to the Head of Corporate Governance and Administration, NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde, Corporate HQ, JB Russell House, Gartnavel Royal Hospital, 1055 Great Western Road, Glasgow G12 0XH or by email to [foi@ggc.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:foi@ggc.scot.nhs.uk)

If following a review you remain dissatisfied with the outcome, you have the right to ask for advice, assistance or to make a formal appeal in writing to the Scottish Information Commissioner within six months of receiving the outcome of a review. The Commissioner can be contacted at: Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9DS or at [www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal)

If following appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner you still remain dissatisfied with the outcome, you have a right of appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law against the decision of the Scottish Information Commissioner.

Should you require any clarification about this letter or the right to request a review please contact me at the details at the top of the first page of this letter.

Yours sincerely

**Kay Dougans**  
**Freedom of Information Officer**

Standard Enclosures:  
FOI Requirement for Review document  
Request for Review form