

Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002

DATE RECEIVED	02/02/2022	SUBJECT	Home Births		
PASSED TO	Information Maternity	DATE PASSED	03/02/2022	RESPOND BY	23/02/2022
CATEGORY	Press	FoI NUMBER	2022-049		

Question/s to be Answered

I'm getting in touch from BBC Scotland to request data and a statement regarding maternity/midwifery services, for a news package.

We're hearing anecdotally that interest in home births in 2021 was up, (though that may not necessarily be reflected in the number of people having home births due to NHS staff availability etc)

Could you please provide data on the number of home births within your health board in 2021 – and in 2020, 2019, 2018 and 2017, if possible for comparative purposes? As well as what percentage this represents of overall number of births each year, for context.

See table on next page

In addition to the data, it would be very helpful if could you please tell us:

- what's understood to be behind any increase (or decrease) – ie: active campaigns for home births, Covid prompting fear of hospital/midwifery unit attendance, or what have you
- how have staff levels affected this if at all
- how much savings has this generated for the health board if any
- does the health board have goals to increase the number of home births (Scotland in recent years had the lowest figure across the UK)

Home birth requests have remained static. There was a period Oct – Dec where the service was suspended but there were no requests for a homebirth during this period. Therefore choice was not compromised.

There are no goals to increase the number of homebirths. This is, in part, due to the remote and rural location and the ability to get to homes in a timely manner and, to ensure safe retrieval if needed

