



Privacy Office
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February 21, 2020



Re: Full disclosure – OUR FILE# NSHA-2020-03

On 2020/01/08 Nova Scotia Health Authority (NSHA) received your request under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPOP) Act for a copy of the following:

'data on the number of patients that died while on a waiting list for a surgical procedure in 2018-19'.

Please find attached the requested data. We are now closing your file with our office.

Sincerely,
Fola Adeleke

For: The Privacy Office
Nova Scotia Health Authority

c/c: to file

Response to FOIPOP Request: *Please provide data on the number of patients that died while on a waiting list for a surgical procedure in 2018-19. Please provide data separated by procedure and note the government's target time for providing the procedure in question.*

In the attached dataset we can see that 398 patients died while waiting for surgery among over 24,000 patients who were on the waiting list for surgery during the calendar year 2018. This is a consistent figure over the past several years. The great majority (373/398) of deaths occurred in patients awaiting procedures that would not be anticipated to change the probability of death. For example, 131 deaths occurred among patients awaiting cataract surgery. Other examples of procedures not anticipated to be implicated in mortality include cystoscopy; orthopaedic procedures for arthritis; dental surgery; and other procedures that do not involve either cancer treatment or cardiovascular procedures. Twenty five (6.3%) of all deaths on the waiting list involved procedures where delays in treatment might reasonably be implicated causally. Among these are bowel resections; angioplasty; pacemaker insertion; cancer resections and abdominal aneurysm surgery. Among these, just over half were waiting beyond the recommended wait times for the procedure in question. At this point we do not have precise data around cause of death for these patients and cannot comment on the probability of death avoidance if surgery were performed.

It is worthwhile noting that this data is based on our surgical booking/scheduling system and there is the potential for errors where patients may be left on the system even though a decision has been made by patient and surgeon not to pursue surgery or placed in the system prior to being ready to treat, thus the mortality rate among those waiting may be falsely high.

Finally, the mortality rate in Nova Scotia is generally just below 1% (0.97% for 2018) while the mortality rate among those queued for surgery is about 1.6%. The average age of patients waiting for surgery is likely considerably higher than the average age in Nova Scotia (43 years of age) such that the death rate among patients waiting for surgery may be very close to that of an age matched group of Nova Scotians.

Row Labels	Surgeon Assigned Target Wait In Days	Num Days Waiting
CATARACT EXTRACTION	21	155
CATARACT EXTRACTION	21	773
CATARACT EXTRACTION	42	8
CATARACT EXTRACTION	42	33
CATARACT EXTRACTION	42	35
CATARACT EXTRACTION	42	81
CATARACT EXTRACTION	42	111
CATARACT EXTRACTION	42	264
CATARACT EXTRACTION	42	291
CATARACT EXTRACTION	42	352
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	7
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	10
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	14
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	18
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	31
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	35
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	41
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	52
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	65
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	86
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	91
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	97
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	104
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	113
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	116
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	118
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	144
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	146
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	154
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	155
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	174
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	185
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	190
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	203
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	204
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	205
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	211
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	220
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	225
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	233
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	241
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	274
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	290
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	326
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	335
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	344

CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	353
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	354
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	387
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	399
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	404
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	407
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	409
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	430
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	463
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	471
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	494
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	524
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	561
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	638
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	663
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	716
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	723
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	747
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	749
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	757
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	770
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	771
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	806
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	918
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	1217
CATARACT EXTRACTION	91	1272
CATARACT EXTRACTION	182	56
CATARACT EXTRACTION	182	57
CATARACT EXTRACTION	182	93
CATARACT EXTRACTION	182	95
CATARACT EXTRACTION	182	97
CATARACT EXTRACTION	182	98
CATARACT EXTRACTION	182	114
CATARACT EXTRACTION	182	142
CATARACT EXTRACTION	182	145
CATARACT EXTRACTION	182	153
CATARACT EXTRACTION	182	169
CATARACT EXTRACTION	182	172
CATARACT EXTRACTION	182	211
CATARACT EXTRACTION	182	216
CATARACT EXTRACTION	182	217
CATARACT EXTRACTION	182	240
CATARACT EXTRACTION	182	265
CATARACT EXTRACTION	182	295
CATARACT EXTRACTION	182	306
CATARACT EXTRACTION	182	329
CATARACT EXTRACTION	182	393

CATARACT EXTRACTION		182	485
CATARACT EXTRACTION		182	765
CATARACT EXTRACTION		365	18
CATARACT EXTRACTION		365	33
CATARACT EXTRACTION		365	380
CATARACT EXTRACTION		365	502
CATARACT EXTRACTION	NULL		NULL
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CYSTOSCOPY		21	73
CYSTOSCOPY		21	94
CYSTOSCOPY		21	103
CYSTOSCOPY		21	105
CYSTOSCOPY		21	117
CYSTOSCOPY		21	214
CYSTOSCOPY		21	231
CYSTOSCOPY		21	247
CYSTOSCOPY		21	288
CYSTOSCOPY		21	328
CYSTOSCOPY		21	374
CYSTOSCOPY		21	694
CYSTOSCOPY		42	25
CYSTOSCOPY		42	74
CYSTOSCOPY		42	88
CYSTOSCOPY		42	98
CYSTOSCOPY		42	109
CYSTOSCOPY		42	220
CYSTOSCOPY		42	235
CYSTOSCOPY		42	749
CYSTOSCOPY		42	1498
CYSTOSCOPY		91	8
CYSTOSCOPY		91	20
CYSTOSCOPY		91	25
CYSTOSCOPY		91	52
CYSTOSCOPY		91	74
CYSTOSCOPY		91	81
CYSTOSCOPY		91	208
CYSTOSCOPY		91	268
CYSTOSCOPY		91	427
CYSTOSCOPY		91	443
CYSTOSCOPY		91	743
CYSTOSCOPY		91	1380
CYSTOSCOPY		182	120
CYSTOSCOPY		182	206
CYSTOSCOPY		182	521
CYSTOSCOPY		182	605
CYSTOSCOPY		182	839

CYSTOSCOPY		182	984
CYSTOSCOPY		182	1112
CYSTOSCOPY		182	1267
CYSTOSCOPY		365	310
CYSTOSCOPY		365	414
CYSTOSCOPY		365	445
CYSTOSCOPY		365	1070
CYSTOSCOPY		365	1238
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CYSTOSCOPY	NULL		63
CYSTOSCOPY	NULL		70
CYSTOSCOPY	NULL		74
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CYSTOSCOPY	NULL		175
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CYSTOSCOPY	NULL		419
CYSTOSCOPY	NULL		477
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CYSTOSCOPY	NULL		750
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CYSTOSCOPY	NULL		1095
CYSTOSCOPY	NULL		1185
CYSTOSCOPY	NULL		1193
CYSTOSCOPY	NULL		1624
KNEE ARTHROPLASTY		42	28
KNEE ARTHROPLASTY		42	1585
KNEE ARTHROPLASTY		91	173
KNEE ARTHROPLASTY		91	218
KNEE ARTHROPLASTY		91	488
KNEE ARTHROPLASTY		91	1157
KNEE ARTHROPLASTY		182	77
KNEE ARTHROPLASTY		182	160
KNEE ARTHROPLASTY		182	171
KNEE ARTHROPLASTY		182	461
KNEE ARTHROPLASTY		182	669
KNEE ARTHROPLASTY		182	764
KNEE ARTHROPLASTY		182	1361
KNEE ARTHROPLASTY		182	1771
KNEE ARTHROPLASTY		365	452
KNEE ARTHROPLASTY		365	467
KNEE ARTHROPLASTY		365	592

KNEE ARTHROPLASTY	365	985
KNEE ARTHROPLASTY	365	1501
KNEE ARTHROPLASTY	365	1724
KNEE ARTHROPLASTY	365	1970
HIP ARTHROPLASTY	91	375
HIP ARTHROPLASTY	91	490
HIP ARTHROPLASTY	91	1774
HIP ARTHROPLASTY	182	37
HIP ARTHROPLASTY	182	97
HIP ARTHROPLASTY	182	272
HIP ARTHROPLASTY	182	341
HIP ARTHROPLASTY	182	357
HIP ARTHROPLASTY	182	535
HIP ARTHROPLASTY	365	344
HIP ARTHROPLASTY	365	711
HIP ARTHROPLASTY	365	1106
CYSTOSCOPY/TURP	21	176
CYSTOSCOPY/TURP	42	16
CYSTOSCOPY/TURP	42	43
CYSTOSCOPY/TURP	42	94
CYSTOSCOPY/TURP	42	131
CYSTOSCOPY/TURP	42	182
CYSTOSCOPY/TURP	42	220
CYSTOSCOPY/TURP	91	33
CYSTOSCOPY/TURP	91	173
CYSTOSCOPY/TURP	91	197
CYSTOSCOPY/TURP	91	283
CYSTOSCOPY/TURP	182	897
VITRECTOMY/VITREORETINAL PRC	21	142
VITRECTOMY/VITREORETINAL PRC	21	397
VITRECTOMY/VITREORETINAL PRC	91	243
VITRECTOMY/VITREORETINAL PRC	91	429
VITRECTOMY/VITREORETINAL PRC	91	670
VITRECTOMY/VITREORETINAL PRC	182	92
VITRECTOMY/VITREORETINAL PRC	182	131
CYSTOSCOPY/TURB	21	32
CYSTOSCOPY/TURB	21	36
CYSTOSCOPY/TURB	21	41
CYSTOSCOPY/TURB	21	107
CYSTOSCOPY/TURB	42	61
CYSTOSCOPY/TURB	42	72
CYSTOSCOPY/TURB	182	945
DENTOALVEOLAR SURGERY (EXTR/	91	33
DENTOALVEOLAR SURGERY (EXTR/	91	244
DENTOALVEOLAR SURGERY (EXTR/	91	335
DENTOALVEOLAR SURGERY (EXTR/	91	455
DENTOALVEOLAR SURGERY (EXTR/	91	627

DENTOALVEOLAR SURGERY (EXTR/	91	725
DENTOALVEOLAR SURGERY (EXTR/	91	1442
DENTAL RESTORATIONS	91	265
DENTAL RESTORATIONS	182	60
DENTAL RESTORATIONS	182	300
DENTAL RESTORATIONS	182	606
DENTAL RESTORATIONS	182	1204
DENTAL RESTORATIONS	182	1308
URETER- CATHETER/STENT INSERT	21	36
URETER- CATHETER/STENT INSERT	91	53
URETER- CATHETER/STENT INSERT	91	60
URETER- CATHETER/STENT INSERT	91	118
URETER- CATHETER/STENT INSERT	91	559
URETER- CATHETER/STENT INSERT	182	92
HERNIORRAPHY- INGUINAL/FEMO	91	57
HERNIORRAPHY- INGUINAL/FEMO	182	16
HERNIORRAPHY- INGUINAL/FEMO	182	161
HERNIORRAPHY- INGUINAL/FEMO	365	457
HERNIORRAPHY- INGUINAL/FEMO	365	773
BOWEL RESECTION/REPAIR	7	177
BOWEL RESECTION/REPAIR	42	543
BOWEL RESECTION/REPAIR	91	16
BOWEL RESECTION/REPAIR	91	728
LAPAROSCOPIC HERNIORRAPHY- II	365	170
LAPAROSCOPIC HERNIORRAPHY- II	365	391
LAPAROSCOPIC HERNIORRAPHY- II	365	657
LAPAROSCOPIC HERNIORRAPHY- II	365	2091
CIRCUMCISION	91	295
CIRCUMCISION	91	317
CIRCUMCISION	91	436
CIRCUMCISION	91	511
HYDROCELECTOMY	42	82
HYDROCELECTOMY	91	622
HYDROCELECTOMY	91	643
KNEE ARTHROSCOPY	91	234
KNEE ARTHROSCOPY	91	323
KNEE ARTHROSCOPY	182	962
ANGIOPLASTY	42	16
ANGIOPLASTY	91	279
INSERTION/REMOVAL VASCULAR /	21	15
INSERTION/REMOVAL VASCULAR /	91	71
CYSTOSCOPY URETEROSCOPY	91	24
CYSTOSCOPY URETEROSCOPY	182	59
CYSTO URODYNAMICS	42	39
CYSTO URODYNAMICS	42	316
KNEE ARTHROPLASTY REVISION	91	1236
KNEE ARTHROPLASTY REVISION	365	301

SHOULDER ARTHROPLASTY	182	522
SHOULDER ARTHROPLASTY	182	569
PACEMAKER INSERTION/EXPLOR/F	91	8
PACEMAKER INSERTION/EXPLOR/F	91	94
LAPAROSCOPIC CHOLECYSTECTOM	91	279
LAPAROSCOPIC CHOLECYSTECTOM	182	1417
AV FISTULA CREATION/REVISION/C	91	115
AV FISTULA CREATION/REVISION/C	91	235
OPEN REDUCTION INTERNAL FIXA1	182	649
OPEN REDUCTION INTERNAL FIXA1 NULL	NULL	
CYSTECTOMY	42	43
CYSTECTOMY	91	366
HIP ARTHROSCOPY	365	1261
HIP ARTHROSCOPY	365	1584
SHOULDER ARTHROSCOPY	91	503
SHOULDER ARTHROSCOPY	365	1345
EXCISION OF CYST/GANGLION/LES	42	206
EXCISION OF CYST/GANGLION/LES	42	412
VATS APICAL RESECTION	42	1141
VATS APICAL RESECTION	91	180
HALLUX RELEASE	42	568
HALLUX RELEASE	182	57
HARDWARE REMOVAL	91	73
HARDWARE REMOVAL	182	1364
AMPUTATION	91	13
AMPUTATION	182	202
NECK DISSECTION (ANY TYPE)	42	60
TEMPEROMANDIBULAR JOINT	365	598
REPAIR ANEURYSM	42	51
HAND/WRIST ARTHRODESIS (FUSI	182	573
URETHROSCOPY/URETHROTOMY	21	707
CARPAL TUNNEL RELEASE	182	473
PANAENDOSCOPY	182	27
HEAD: CRANIOTOMY FOR TUMOR	91	48
EXCISION VULVAR LESION (SKINNII	42	435
HERNIORRAPHY- INCISIONAL	91	369
TONSILLECTOMY AND ADENOIDEC	182	76
ANKLE ARTHRODESIS (FUSION)	182	1073
HAND/FINGER ARTHROPLASTY	182	124
HERNIORRAPHY-UMBILICAL/ PARA	182	298
EXCISION BONE/EXOSTOSIS	182	198
BONE/ CARTILAGE GRAFT	42	63
PAROTIDECTOMY	365	652
CLOSURE COLOSTOMY/ILEOSTOMI	182	5
SEPTOPLASTY	365	1464
HIP ARTHROTOMY	182	481
SPINE: CERVICAL FUSION ANTERIO	182	416

DACRYOCYSTORHINOSTOMY (DCR	91	509
THORACOSCOPY/PLEUROSCOPY	42	24
HYSTERECTOMY (All Types)	91	14
Unknown Procedure	7	24
WHIPPLE PROCEDURE	42	244
GASTRECTOMY	42	2
ILEOSTOMY	182	931
MUSCLE: BIOPSY	21	22
COLOSTOMY	91	248
NEPHRECTOMY	21	70
KERATOPLASTY/ CORNEAL TRANSF	365	91
BYPASS GRAFT	42	29
ARTHROPLASTY HIP REVISION	91	1334
PARATHYROIDECTOMY	182	1107
DMSO/ BLADDER INSTILLATION	21	144
PENILE PROSTHESIS-INSERTION/RE	365	803
ENDARTERECTOMY	91	804
REPAIR/RECONSTRUCTION LIGAMI	182	335
ENDOVASCULAR AORTIC ANEURYS	91	81
EXCISION OF MASS	7	123
EXAM UNDER ANESTHESIA	91	498
SHOULDER ARTHROTOMY	182	1756
LAPAROSCOPIC HERNIORRAPHY- II	365	115
SUGARBAKER (PERITONECTOMY)	91	148
LAPAROSCOPIC HERNIORRAPHY- L	365	444
TEMPORAL ARTERY BIOPSY	21	166
LAPAROSCOPIC SPLENECTOMY	42	18
THYROPLASTY	42	29
LAPAROTOMY NISSEN FUNDOPLIC	91	310
TYMPANOPLASTY (W/WO GRAFTII	182	187
LAPAROTOMY-EXPLORATORY	21	351
FUNCTIONAL ENDOSCOPIC SINUS !	21	403
LARYNGOSCOPY	365	171
UROSTOMY	182	554
LEG: IM NAILING	182	766
CYSTOLITHOPAXY/ CYSTOLITHOTO	42	46
MANIPULATION EXTREMITY	91	510
MASTECTOMY	42	453
ILEAL CONDUIT/UROSTOMY	42	98
Grand Total		

Days Past Target	Number of Deaths
-134	1
-752	1
34	1
9	1
7	1
-39	1
-69	1
-222	1
-249	1
-310	1
84	2
81	2
77	1
73	2
60	1
56	2
50	1
39	1
26	1
5	1
0	2
-6	1
-13	1
-22	1
-25	2
-27	1
-53	2
-55	2
-63	2
-64	1
-83	3
-94	1
-99	1
-112	2
-113	1
-114	2
-120	1
-129	1
-134	1
-142	1
-150	1
-183	1
-199	1
-235	2
-244	1
-253	2

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125	2
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84	2
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