



Privacy Office; Legal Services
108B Charter House
1465 Brenton Street
Halifax, NS B3J 1H1
foipop@nshealth.ca

12/20/24



Sent via e-mail to: kristen@secondstreet.org

Dear Kristen Schulz:

Re: Full Disclosure – OUR FILE# NSHA-NSHA-116

On 07/03/24, Nova Scotia Health (NSH) received your request under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPOP Act)*.

We understand your application to be for a copy of the following:

Please provide data on the number of patients that died while on a waiting list for surgery or a procedure in fiscal year 2023-24. Please break the data out by procedure and case info – date the patient was referred to a specialist, decision date, date for the procedure and date of cancellation. Please also note the government’s target time for providing the procedure in question. (Note: many hospitals/health regions were able to identify such cases as they track the reason for cancelled operations)

Please find a copy of the records located in response to your request. We are providing these records to you in their entirety.

We are now closing your file.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

You have the right to seek a review with the Review Officer within 60 days of receiving this decision. Complete details of the process are outlined on the website of the Office of the Information & Privacy Commissioner: [Request a Review | Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner for Nova Scotia](#).



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Sincerely,

Rozi Colbourne

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rozi C". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Rozi" and a large, stylized initial "C".

Freedom of Information Officer
Nova Scotia Health Authority
Halifax, Nova Scotia



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FOIPOP:

NSHA-2024-116

Request Description:

Data on the number of patients that died while on a waiting list for surgery or a procedure in fiscal year 2023-24. Please break the data out by procedure and case info – date the patient was referred to a specialist, decision date, date for the procedure and date of cancellation. Please also note the government's target time for providing the procedure in question.

Data Description:

In the attached dataset we can see that 373 patients died while waiting for surgery among over 18,500 patients who were on the waiting list for surgery during the fiscal year 2023/2024. NSH does not have info on cause of death, which is a function of the Medical Examiner's Office, but we can see from the procedures that many individuals were waiting for, that there is not an automatic relationship between being on a wait list and cause of death. For example, many people were waiting for cataract surgery, hip or knee replacement, and other similar procedures. We cannot comment on the probability of death avoidance if surgery were performed. It is worthwhile noting that this data is based on our booking system and there are sometimes patients inappropriately left on the system even though a decision has been made by the patient and surgeon not to pursue surgery, thus the mortality rate among those waiting may be falsely high.

FOIPOP 2024-116: NS Health Expired Patients on Surgical Waitlist

Apr 2023 - Mar 2024

Source: PARNs Database, via NSH Performance & Analytics

Procedure	# Expired	Minimum Surgical Wait (days)	90th Percentile Surgical Wait (days)	Median Surgical Wait (days)
CATARACT EXTRACTION	98	4	1,005	217
Cystoscopy	82	4	511	110
KNEE ARTHROPLASTY	25	48	737	384
CYSTOSCOPY/TURB & CYSTOSCOPY/TURP	16	22	309	112
URETER- CATHETER/STENT INSERTION/REMOVAL OR DILATION	11	19	437	82
HERNIORRAPHY	10	45	931	386
BOWEL RESECTION/REPAIR	9	4	707	139
HIP ARTHROPLASTY	9	118	1,749	531
Dental Surgery	7	134	2,198	571
VITRECTOMY/VITREORETINAL PROCEDURE (removal IO lens, scleral buckle)	6	1	370	108
LAPAROSCOPIC CHOLECYSTECTOMY	5	26	504	180
ENDARTERECTOMY	<5	18	440	287
SHOULDER ARTHROPLASTY	<5	314	510	421
VATS APICAL RESECTION	<5	2	514	266
CLOSURE COLOSTOMY/ILEOSTOMY	<5	316	1,037	537
HARDWARE REMOVAL	<5	176	966	946
REPAIR ANEURYSM	<5	55	561	457
TRABECULECTOMY	<5	13	43	13
ABDOMINAL PERINEAL RESECTION	<5	18	274	160
CIRCUMCISION	<5	111	215	169
CORONARY ARTERY BYPASS GRAFT WITHOUT VALVES	<5	8	16	13
CYSTECTOMY	<5	54	93	76
EXCISION DUPUYTREN'S CONTRACTURE(PALMAR FASCIA)	<5	247	329	293
HYSTERECTOMY (All Types)	<5	58	261	171
KERATOPLASTY/ CORNEAL TRANSPLANT	<5	254	366	316
KNEE ARTHROSCOPY	<5	39	677	394
LARYNGECTOMY	<5	16	664	376
LITHOTRIPSY/LASER/ BASKET EXTRACTION	<5	546	748	658
NECK DISSECTION (ANY TYPE)	<5	31	62	48
OTHER	<5	8	256	146
SPINE SURGERY	<5	77	85	82
SUPRAPUBIC CATHETER INSERTION	<5	73	321	211
SURGERY FOR FEMALE INCONTINENCE	<5	261	1,247	809
TYMPANOPLASTY (W/WO GRAFTING, CANALPLASTY, OSSICULOPLASTY)	<5	323	852	617
VALVE REPLACEMENT/REPAIR	<5	26	31	29
ADENOIDECTOMY	<5	187	187	187
AV FISTULA CREATION/REVISION/CLOSURE	<5	312	312	312
BYPASS GRAFT	<5	535	535	535
ENUCLEATION/EVISERATION EYE	<5	15	15	15
ESOPHAGOSCOPY	<5	719	719	719
EXCISION OF TUMOR	<5	330	330	330
EXCISION VULVAR LESION (SKINNING/WIDE LOCAL EXCISION	<5	331	331	331
GASTROSTOMY/DUODENOSTOMY/IEJUNOSTOMY W/WO TUBES	<5	203	203	203
GINGIVOPLASTY/STOMATOPLASTY	<5	50	50	50
HEMORRHOIDECTOMY	<5	2,318	2,318	2,318
HYDROCELECTOMY	<5	281	281	281
INSERTION/REMOVAL VASCULAR ACCESS CATHETER	<5	15	15	15
LAPAROSCOPIC GASTRECTOMY	<5	171	171	171
LAPAROSCOPIC SPLENECTOMY	<5	748	748	748
LAPAROSCOPIC-NISSEN FUNDOPLICATION	<5	478	478	478
LAPAROSCOPY-DIAGNOSTIC	<5	126	126	126
LAPAROTOMY-EXPLORATORY	<5	149	149	149
MANIPULATION EXTREMITY	<5	147	147	147
MUSCLE: BIOPSY	<5	8	8	8
NEPHRECTOMY	<5	221	221	221
NEPHROLITHOTOMY	<5	51	51	51
OOPHORECTOMY/SALPINGECTOMY	<5	33	33	33
OPERATIVE HYSTEROSCOPY	<5	339	339	339
PARATHYROIDECTOMY	<5	425	425	425
PENECTOMY	<5	61	61	61
PERICARDIAL WINDOW	<5	1	1	1
PHARYNGECTOMY/PHARYNGOSCOPY	<5	146	146	146
PROSTATECTOMY LAPAROSCOPIC	<5	193	193	193
REGIONAL LYMPH NODE BIOPSY/ DISSECTION (HEAD AND NECK, ILIO INGUINAL, ETC.)	<5	55	55	55
REPAIR ECTROPIAN/ENTROPIAN	<5	24	24	24
SEPTOPLASTY	<5	1,842	1,842	1,842
SHOULDER ARTHROSCOPY	<5	240	240	240
THORACOSCOPY/PLEUROSCOPY	<5	152	152	152
THYROIDECTOMY	<5	775	775	775
TUBE/CATHETER/SHUNT REMOVAL/INSERTION	<5	533	533	533
TYMPANOMASTOIDECTOMY/MASTOIDECTOMY (ALL TYPES)	<5	233	233	233
UROSTOMY	<5	16	16	16
Grand Total	373	1	775	189