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Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-0668
Date: 8th April 2022



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2002

I refer to your recent request for information which has been handled in accordance with the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

For ease of reference, your request is replicated below together with the response.

Have there been any reported and documented incidents of harassment, intimidation or public disorder, associated with either pro-life prayer vigil groups or pro-choice groups, in and around the Glasgow locations below between 1 January 2021 and 31 December 2021?

Full details of every incident; including the date, time and specific location in which any such incident occurred; the name of the individual/group reporting an incident; details of any group or organisation the reporting individual belonged to; full details of any incident including any action required following the incident and the final outcome

In researching your request, our main source of data would be the Police Scotland incident recording system - STORM.

To explain, when a matter is reported to the police - usually by 101 or 999 call - or otherwise comes to police attention, an incident will be logged on this system.

Incidents are categorised to an extent but I would stress first of all that there is no incident classification which would directly relate to the type of incident described in your request.

On the contrary, it is considered likely that such incidents could be recorded under a number of different categories depending on the circumstances - for example noise, disturbance, assault, crime in progress, concern for person etc.

As such, there is no meaningful way the incident classifications could be used to narrow down the information held in relation to each location in terms of your request.

Furthermore, it is recognised that such groups can tend to congregate around the outskirts of the hospital/ clinic - the junction/ road leading up to etc.

For that reason, it was considered more likely that any incidents of relevance to your request might actually be recorded not at the exact address of the hospital/ clinic but at a location in the near vicinity.

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We initially carried out general incident searches for each location and I'm sure you can appreciate that even for a period of a just a year, a busy hospital can be recorded as the locus for a great many incidents, each of which would have to be individually assessed for potential relevance to your request.

Taking all of the above into account, and in terms of our section 15 duty to advise and assist applicants, we have opted on this occasion to take a different approach which I trust you will find acceptable.

For each location, we have carried out a search of the incident log for the words/ phrases - 'pro-life', 'pro-choice', 'abortion', 'vigil' or 'prayer'.

We have also extended the location search to between a 125m radius of Glasgow Royal Infirmary and a 350m radius of Queen Elizabeth University Hospital.

I must stress that Police Scotland do not consider key word searches for specific words/ phrases to be an accurate means of analysis in most circumstances and there may well be incidents of relevance to your request which do not include the specific phrases we have included.

Whilst it would be nigh on impossible to come up with a list of comprehensive search terms, it is however considered likely that the phrases used ought to have captured any incidents of relevance.

All incidents reporting protests/ demonstrations etc have been included.

Whether these could be classed as harassment/ intimidation would be entirely subjective.

A small number of incidents have not been included where it was clear from the incident description that it was not directly relevant to your request - for example where the keyword hit has been a mere coincidence rather than directly relevant.

The results of the exercise are set out below:

A - On Castle Street, between the junctions with Springburn Road and St James' Road, opposite Glasgow Royal Infirmary, G4 0SF

Zero incidents of relevance

B - On Hardgate Road in the area of the junction with Langlands Drive, opposite the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital, G51 4TF

12/01/2021 - 13:00

Complainer (member of the public - not recorded as a protestor or member of any 'group') reported protestors (no 'group' affiliation recorded) gathered with no masks/ social distancing. Protestors were briefed re current restrictions and dispersed.

13/01/2021 - 15:13

Complainer (member of the public - not recorded as a protestor or member of any 'group') reported protestors (no 'group' affiliation recorded) gathered with no masks. Protestors were not traced.

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18/02/2021 - 12:07

Complainer (member of the public - not recorded as a protestor or member of any 'group') reported that '40 days for life' group were gathered across from Maternity Wing of Hospital. Protestors were not traced.

27/04/2021 - 12:20

Caller (member of the public - not recorded as a protestor or member of any 'group') reported protestors (no 'group' affiliation recorded) gathered chanting and shouting about anti-abortion and holding signs. Incident attended - all in order.

01/06/2021 - 13:52

Caller (member of the public - not recorded as a protestor or member of any 'group') reported protestors (no 'group' affiliation recorded) with banners and big signs protesting against abortion. Regular protest, will monitor.

02/06/2021 - 12:42

Caller (member of the public - not recorded as a protestor or member of any 'group') reported protestors (no 'group' affiliation recorded) breaching Covid regulations and holding offensive placards. No issues observed by officers.

07/06/2021 - 11:13

Caller (member of the public - not recorded as a protestor or member of any 'group') reported protestors (no 'group' affiliation recorded) outside maternity unit holding placards. Regular protest, will monitor.

15/06/2021 - 20:31

Caller (member of the public - not recorded as a protestor or member of any 'group') reported protestors (no 'group' affiliation recorded) outside maternity unit holding placards. Regular protest, will monitor.

Should you require any further assistance please contact Information Management quoting the reference number given.

If you are dissatisfied with the way in which Police Scotland has dealt with your request, you are entitled, in the first instance, to request a review of our actions and decisions.

Your request must specify the matter which gives rise to your dissatisfaction and it must be submitted within 40 working days of receiving this response - either by email to foi@scotland.pnn.police.uk or by post to Information Management (Disclosure), Police Scotland, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, G40 4EH.

If you remain dissatisfied following the outcome of that review, you are thereafter entitled to apply to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner within six months for a decision. You can apply [online](#), by email to enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info or by post to Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9DS.

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Should you wish to appeal against the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner's decision, there is an appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

As part of our commitment to demonstrate openness and transparency in respect of the information we hold, an anonymised version of this response will be posted to the Police Scotland Freedom of Information [Disclosure Log](#) in seven days' time.