

Reference:	FOI.18995.25
Subject:	Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) assessments
Date of Request:	2 December 2025

Requested:

Please see details of the information requested below pertaining to data held between April 2018 and March 2025:

1. Number of Autism Assessments undertaken by the health board.
2. Number of assessments with a positive/confirmed outcome.
3. The number of authorised assessors employed by the health board for each year.
4. Autism Assessment waiting list figures at the end of each financial year.
5. The name of the organisation making the referral to the health board for assessment or, if a private individual, "private".
6. Budgetary allowance for each year and actual expenditure for each year for Autism assessment services.
7. Additionally, if possible;
 - 7a. the first part of postcode of the client assessed (i.e. "SA14", or;
 - 7b. the home town of the client, or;
 - 7c. the location of the assessment.

Clarification

The following clarification was sought:

- Can you please clarify what information you are requiring for question 5 please? Are you seeking information on who the UHB accepts referrals from?

The following clarification was received:

Question 5 pertains to who has referred the person for assessment.

For young people and children this may be school, social worker, GP etc. For adults it may be self-referral, GP, social worker or similar.

Response:

Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) is unable to provide you with the information requested for question 2 and 5 of your request, as it is estimated that the cost of answering your request would exceed the "appropriate limit" as stated in the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004. The "appropriate limit" represents the estimated cost of one person spending 18 hours (or 2½ working days) in determining whether the UHB holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

To identify how many patients received a positive/ confirmed outcome from an ASD assessment or to be able to identify the name of the organisation making the referral to the UHB for assessment between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2025, the UHB would need to undertake a trawl of the patient records for all patients that had an ASD assessment during this time period.

The UHB can confirm that two thousand, six hundred and forty-four (2,644) patients were assessed for ASD between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2025. Therefore, to provide you with the exact information being requested for question 2, conducting the search would far exceed the 'appropriate limit', costing the UHB the following:

2,644 @ 5 minutes per item = 220 hours
220 hours @ £25 per hour = £5,500.00

The UHB is therefore applying an exemption under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA), which provides an exemption from a public authority's obligation to comply with a request for information where the cost of compliance is estimated to exceed the appropriate limit.

However, under Section 16 of the FoIA, we are required as a public authority, to provide advice and assistance so far as it is reasonable to individuals who have made a request under the FoIA, this can include assisting a requester to further refine their request.

In relation to the ASD data requested under question 2, the UHB would be able to further consider your request if you were able to narrow down between adults and children plus condense the timeframe of your request. For example, making a request for data for one month per year just for adults rather than the full year's data for both adults and children etc. Refining your request by providing a smaller group and timeframe, may enable the service to undertake a manual trawl of individual patient records, identifying any further information that may fulfil your request.

Aside from the Section 12 exemption detailed above, the UHB provides the accessible information it holds for your further questions below.

1. Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) provides within the table below, the number of ASD assessments undertaken for children and adults between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2025.

Financial Year	Children	Adult
2018/19	367	112
2019/20	385	61
2020/21	200	75
2021/22	316	84
2022/23	153	121
2023/24	37	72
2024/25	584	77
Total	2,042	602

2. The UHB has applied a section 12 exemption to your request.
3. The UHB does not hold historical data for Neurodevelopmental (ND) services. However, the UHB can advise currently within the children's ND service there are 9.1 Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) authorised assessors. Within the adult ASD service, there are 6.1 WTE authorised assessors.

In addition to this, the UHB also has other clinicians working within the children's and adult's Mental Health & Learning Disabilities Clinical Care Group who are trained in the diagnostic assessment of ASD and Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

4. The UHB provides within the table below, the number of children and adults waiting for an ASD assessment at the 31 March of each of the requested financial years.

Financial Year	Children	Adult
31/03/19	456	301
31/03/20	653	578
31/03/21	1,309	698
31/03/22	1,777	1,035
31/03/23	2,478	1,439
31/03/24	3,072	1,729
31/03/25	3,481	2,074

5. The UHB's children's ND service accepts referrals from any professional. The adult ASD service accepts self-referrals (private) as well as referrals from any professional.
6. The UHB provides within the table below the budget and expenditure for the Children's ND service and adult's ASD service between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2025.

Children's ND service		
Financial Year	Budget	Actual Expenditure
2019/ 2020	£291,260.00	£280,330.00
2020/ 2021	£402,884.00	£330,306.00
2021/ 2022	£421,179.00	£432,969.00
2022/ 2023	£598,467.00	£562,058.00
2023/ 2024	£615,514.00	£548,591.00
2024/ 2025	£866,772.00	£821,030.00

Adult ASD service		
Financial Year	Budget	Actual Expenditure
2019/ 2020	£212,773.00	£213,241.00
2020/ 2021	£274,383.00	£258,231.00
2021/ 2022	£205,899.00	£220,101.00
2022/ 2023	£336,807.00	£376,261.00
2023/ 2024	£399,906.00	£431,677.00
2024/ 2025	£597,883.00.00	£491,677.00

Additionally, between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2025 the UHB outsourced ASD assessments to two external providers funded using additional funding received from Welsh Government in addition to ND service improvement programme slippage. The budget and expenditure are provided within the table below.

Outsourced ASD Assessments with 2 external Suppliers		
Financial Year	Budget	Actual Expenditure
2022/ 2023	£0	£344,800.00
2023/ 2024	£0	£771,196.00

2024/ 2025

£816,269.00

£1,448,595.00

7. The UHB is unable to provide you with the data broken down by postcode and hometown, as there is a potential risk of identifying individuals if the information was disclosed in this format, due to the low number of cases (5 and under).

This decision has been made as it is not within the reasonable expectations of these individuals that their personal data would be put into the public domain. This information is classed as personal data of a third party.

Therefore, these details are being withheld in accordance with the exemptions set out in section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA), and by virtue of section 40(3)(a) of the FoIA, which permits a public authority to withhold details pertaining to identifiable information and personal data other than the requestor's where the disclosure would breach Data Protection principles.

This information is protected by the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA)/UK General Data Protection Regulations, as its disclosure would constitute unfair and unlawful processing and would be contrary to the principles and articles of the UK GDPR. This exemption is absolute and therefore, there is no requirement to apply the public interest test.

In reaching this decision, the DPA and UK GDPR define personal data as data that relates to a living individual who can be identified solely from that data or from that data and other information, which is in the possession of the data controller.

However, whilst operating in accordance with the Section 45 Freedom of Information Code of Practice, the UHB has a duty to provide advice and assistance and has therefore provided a breakdown of ASD assessments undertaken by county between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2025.

Financial Year	Carmarthenshire	Ceredigion	Pembrokeshire	Unknown
2024/ 2025	397	46	203	15
2023/ 2024	58	14	37	0
2022/ 2023	145	35	89	*
2021/ 2022	231	36	131	*
2020/ 2021	125	48	100	*
2019/ 2020	232	126	85	*
2018/ 2019	231	83	161	*