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| <b>Reference:</b>       | FOI.18193.25   |
| <b>Subject:</b>         | Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) diagnosis waiting times |
| <b>Date of Request:</b> | 26 August 2025   |

**Requested:**

Please provide the following information, broken down by financial year (e.g., 2022/23, 2023/24, 2024/25) and separated for adults and children/young people:

1. The average waiting time from initial referral to the first diagnostic assessment for autism.
2. The longest waiting time from initial referral to the first diagnostic assessment for autism.
3. The total number of individuals currently on the waiting list for an autism diagnosis.
4. The number of new referrals for an autism diagnosis received each year.

**Response:**

Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) is unable to provide all of the information requested for questions 1 and 2, 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 (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.

ASD data is held on a live list and the UHB does not hold a central record of all historical ASD data. Therefore, the UHB would be required to undertake a trawl of all ASD patient referrals to identify any information that may fulfil questions 1 and 2 for the 2022/23 and 2023/24 financial years.

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 requestor to further refine their request.

Unfortunately, the UHB is unable to provide advice on how you can refine your request further. This is due to the UHB still requiring a manual trawl of all ASD patient referrals to be undertaken to identify information that may fulfil your request.

Under Section 16 of the FoIA, the UHB provides the accessible information it holds below.

1. The UHB provides within the table below, the average wait time from initial referral to first ASD diagnostic assessment for adults and children and young people (CYP), during the 2024/25 financial year.

| Average wait time |                              |     |
|-------------------|------------------------------|-----|
| Financial year    | Adult                        | CYP |
| 2022/23           | Section 12 exemption applied |     |

|         |          |          |
|---------|----------|----------|
| 2023/24 |          |          |
| 2024/25 | 94 weeks | 83 weeks |

2. The UHB provides within the table below, the longest wait time from initial referral to first ASD diagnostic assessment for adults and CYP, during the 2024/25 financial year.

| <b>Longest wait time</b> |                              |            |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Financial year</b>    | <b>Adult</b>                 | <b>CYP</b> |
| 2022/23                  | Section 12 exemption applied |            |
| 2023/24                  |                              |            |
| 2024/25                  | 343 weeks                    | 203 weeks  |

3. The UHB provides within the table below, the number of adults and CYP currently waiting for an ASD assessment, as at 31 August 2025.

| <b>Number currently waiting</b> |            |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Adult</b>                    | <b>CYP</b> |
| 1,760                           | 3,481      |

4. The UHB provides within the table below, the number of new referrals received for adults and CYP for an ASD assessment, during the 2022/23 to 2024/25 financial years.

| <b>Number of new referrals</b> |              |            |
|--------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| <b>Financial year</b>          | <b>Adult</b> | <b>CYP</b> |
| 2022/23                        | 598          | 1,214      |
| 2023/24                        | 695          | 1,311      |
| 2024/25                        | 684          | 1,401      |