

Reference:	FOI.10591.22
Subject:	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) delays and rejections
Date of Request:	23 December 2022

Requested:

Please could you provide me with the following information for your area:

1. The proportion of referrals to the mental health service deemed inappropriate or rejected in the 2019/2020 financial year and the 2020/2021 financial year
2. The reasons for referrals to the mental health services being rejected in these years
3. The median and maximum waiting times between initial assessment and the start of treatment in these years.

Response:

Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) is unable to provide you with the full information requested for question 2, as it is estimated that the cost of answering your request would exceed the “appropriate limit” as stated in the Freedom of Information (Fees and Appropriate Limit) 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.

In order to provide you with the information being requested, the UHB would need to undertake a manual search of all CAMHS patient records, to identify the data required, as this information is not recorded centrally.

The UHB is therefore applying an exemption under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, 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 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the UHB has a duty to provide advice and assistance. Therefore, the UHB has provided the information it holds below.

1. The UHB provides, within the table overleaf, the percentage of referrals to the CAMHS that were deemed inappropriate or rejected, during the 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 financial years.

Financial year	Percentage
2019/20	26.4%
2020/21	29.2%

2. Section 12 exemption applied. However, as stated above, under Section 16 of the FOIA, the UHB can provide the frequent reasons for not accepting CAMHS referrals.

Reasons can include that the need outlined in the referral does not include Mental Health (MH) need, for example it instead describes social, neurodevelopmental and/or behavioural needs, or the need can best be met within another service, such as school counselling, School in-Reach service, voluntary sector or local authority provided services. Another reason is that there is no evidence of consent from the parents/carers of the child or young person.

3. The UHB provides within the table below, the median and maximum waiting times between initial assessment and the start of treatment, during the 2020/21 and 2021/22 financial years.

Financial year	Median	Maximum
2019/20	4 weeks	27 weeks
2020/21	2 weeks	11 weeks