

Reference:	FOI.16615.25
Subject:	Continuing Healthcare (CHC)
Date of Request:	17 February 2025

Requested:

1. In the following calendar years, how many referrals of any form were made to the Health Board for Fast-Track Continuing Healthcare?
 - 2022
 - 2023
 - 2024

2. How many of the referrals in question 1 were rejected as inappropriate by the Health Board? Please provide figures for the following calendar years:
 - 2022
 - 2023
 - 2024

3. Please explain, in general terms, the main reasons for which referrals were deemed inappropriate

4. How many of the referrals in question 1 were withdrawn/closed by a) The referrer, or b) The patient/their family. Please provide figures for the following calendar years:
 - 2022
 - 2023
 - 2024

5. How many of the referrals in question 1 were withdrawn/closed as a result of the patient dying before any funding was put in place? Please provide figures for the following calendar years:
 - 2022
 - 2023
 - 2024

6. In the following calendar years, how many referrals were accepted for Fast-Track Continuing Healthcare?
 - 2022
 - 2023
 - 2024

7. In the following calendar years, what was the average timeframe - for Fast-Track CHC referrals that were accepted - between receipt of the completed Fast Track Pathway Tool and the care package being commissioned. Please provide the answer in hours where possible, or otherwise in days.
 - 2022
 - 2023
 - 2024

If data for calendar years cannot be provided, please instead give the average timeframe for the most relevant period for which data can be compiled (for example, December 2022, December 2023, and December 2024).

8. In the following calendar years, what was the average timeframe - for Fast-Track CHC referrals that were accepted - between receipt of the completed Fast Track Pathway Tool and the funding for the care package being put in place. Please provide the answer days.
- 2022
 - 2023
 - 2024

If data for calendar years cannot be provided, please instead give the average timeframe for the most relevant period for which data can be compiled (for example, December 2022, December 2023, and December 2024).

9. Please can you explain the decision-making process for Fast-Track Continuing Healthcare referrals, giving details of all criteria involved in the process between receiving the referral and commissioning support?

As part of this, please could you explain:

10. The criteria you use for who can make a Fast-Track CHC referral (for example, are non-NHS medical professionals, care home nurses and/or GPs able to do this?)
11. Whether Fast-Track Continuing Healthcare referrals made by an appropriate clinician are subject to further checks by professionals working for, or on behalf of, the Health Board before being granted? Please explain this process if so.
12. Whether a patient referred by an appropriate clinician is required to meet further criteria, such as having a primary health need, in order to qualify for Fast-Track support?

Response:

1. Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) provides, within the table below, the number of referrals made for fast-track CHC for the 2022 to 2024 calendar years.

Year	Referrals
2022	569
2023	518
2024	591

2. Of the referrals mentioned in question 1, the UHB provides, within the table below, the number of those that were deemed as inappropriate and were rejected for the 2022 to 2024 calendar years.

Year	Rejected
2022	22
2023	35
2024	23

3. The UHB confirms that the main reason for the referrals being deemed as inappropriate was that the individual did not meet the eligibility criteria, by not having a primary health need.
4. The UHB does not hold this information.

5. The UHB does not hold this information.
6. The UHB provides, within the table overleaf, the number of referrals that were accepted for fast-track CHC for the 2022 to 2024 calendar years.

Year	Accepted Referrals
2022	547
2023	483
2024	568

7. The UHB provides within the table below, the average timeframe from fast-track CHC referrals being accepted and completed to the care package being commissioned, during the 2022 to 2024 calendar years.

Year	Average Timeframe
2022	7.8 hours
2023	9.18 hours
2024	16.3 hours

8. The UHB is unable to provide an average timeframe that a fast-track CHC referral is accepted, completed and funding for the care package put in place, as commissioning is only agreed when a care package is sourced to ensure the quality assurance process has been completed.
9. The UHB confirms that the criteria for fast track CHC referrals is:
 - An individual who is on the End of Life Care Pathways (48-72 hours)
 - An individual who has less than seven days' life expectancy
 - An individual who is entering a terminal phase, who has a rapidly deteriorating condition and a primary health need

Additionally, the process for these referrals is that when an application is received, it is checked to ensure eligibility is met; if eligibility is not met, then further information is requested from the care co-ordinator. If eligibility is met, contact is made with in-house services to establish if they have capacity to meet the needs for a domiciliary care package. If there is no capacity or a placement is required, an appropriate provider is sourced. Following this, quality assurance of the provider and package is undertaken and completed, and a commissioning package is requested.

10. The UHB confirms that fast-track CHC assessments should be completed by an appropriate clinician. The clinician should give reasons on why the individual meets the conditions requiring a fast-track CHC decision to be made. An appropriate clinician is someone who acts in accordance with the National Health Service (Wales) Act 2006 and is responsible for an individual's diagnosis, treatment and care. Additionally, this is an individual who is a registered nurse or medical practitioner.

11. & 12. Please see response to question 9.