

Reference:	FOI.5176.21
Subject:	COVID-19 vaccine
Date of Request:	29 January 2021

Requested:

I would like to request the following information under the Freedom of Information Act:

1. The number of people who received a vaccination against COVID-19 before January 25th 2021, who were neither a frontline worker nor aged over 70.
2. Details of policy on using 'left-over' (i.e. doses left unused at the end of a vaccinating session) COVID-19 vaccinations before January 25th 2021.
3. What role (if any) did the pharmaceutical department play in the distribution of 'left over' vaccinations against COVID-19?
4. Any correspondence including the registration code for booking a vaccination against COVID-19 sent by members of the Executive Board or the Chief Pharmacist before 27th January 2021.

Response:

Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) is unable to provide you with all of the information requested as it is estimated that the cost of answering your request would exceed the "appropriate level" as stated in the Freedom of Information (Fees and Appropriate Limit) Regulations 2004. The "appropriate level" represents the estimated cost of one person spending 18 hours or (2 ½ 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 requested for question 1, the UHB would need manually scrutinise the Welsh Immunisation System (WIS) to identify the members of staff that have received the vaccine and cross reference the job role recorded to identify any information that fulfils your request, as this information is not recorded centrally.

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.

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 FoIA.

The UHB can confirm that of the 35,378 vaccines administered, during the period 8 December 2020 and 25 January 2021, 22,305 were administered to people aged under seventy (70) years of age.

The UHB is following the advice of the Joint Committee of Vaccination & Immunisation (JCVI) and continues to offer vaccines to patient-facing staff groups, which include high risk patient-facing staff, frontline health care staff, domiciliary and social care staff in accordance with JCVI advice, which can be accessed via the following link:

[Priority groups for coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccination: advice from the JCVI, 2 December 2020 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/priority-groups-for-coronavirus-covid-19-vaccination-advice-from-the-jcvi-2-december-2020)

Additionally, the UHB's vaccine data is published on a weekly basis and can be located on the UHB's press release webpages via the following link:

[Press releases - Hywel Dda University Health Board \(nhs.wales\)](https://www.nhs.uk/press-releases/hywel-d-da-university-health-board)

2. The UHB confirms that it does not hold a policy regarding the use of 'left-over' vaccines. However, the UHB does have standard procedures to ensure as little vaccine as possible left over.

The UHB has a reserve list of eligible staff and those in priority groups 1 to 4, who are yet to receive their first dose, are contacted, time permitting, are offered to attend for a vaccine, should any become available due to appointments that have not been attended or cancelled.

On the very rare occasions that these appointments were not fully taken up or there is very limited time to use the available vaccines, staff on site, who are eligible for a vaccine as part of groups 1 to 4, have been given and taken up the opportunity to be vaccinated.

At the beginning of the vaccination programme roll out, the UHB also engaged with Local Authority (LA) colleagues, who were able to call on eligible staff at short notice to attend for vaccination.

Additionally, the UHB provides, within the table below, the number of vaccines that were available and those that were unused, during the period 8 December 2020 to 25 January 2021.

Vaccine	Number
Available	20,000
Unused/wasted	74
% Unused/wasted	0.4%

3. The UHB confirms that the pharmaceutical department advised on cold chain and stability of distribution of the vaccine according to manufacturer's information.

The vaccine distribution is managed by the session co-ordinator working on the day. Every effort is taken to ensure all vaccines are administered. The risk of vaccine loss only currently applies to the Pfizer vaccine, due to the limitations around its storage and use; the session co-ordinator therefore has a reserve list of those in the priority groups 1 to 4 that are waiting for vaccines who will be contacted, should there be spare vaccines available.

4. The UHB confirms that eligible health and social care staff were invited to book a vaccine appointment via an online web link for the period prior to 27 January 2021.

No correspondence has been issued by the Board or Chief Pharmacist inviting people to book their vaccinations. All staff are invited to book their appointments online via a link circulated by email, whilst GP practices are contacting their patients by letter or telephone offering an appointment to receive the vaccine.

The only letter issued by a member of the Board, was a joint letter sent to all households in the Hywel Dda area in partnership with the LAs, the letter itself was not directly about appointment booking but provided information about the vaccination to ease the concerns commonly raised.