

Reference:	FOI.18229.25
Subject:	Delayed/cancelled treatments
Date of Request:	29 August 2025

Requested:

1. How many times were surgeries, treatments or procedures forced to be delayed or cancelled due to shortages or the unavailability of radiography staff in each of the last five years, plus the current year to date?
2. How many times were surgeries, treatments or procedures forced to be delayed or cancelled due to shortages or the unavailability of radiology equipment in each of the last five years, plus the current year to date?

Response:

Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) is unable to provide you with the information requested, 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.

In order to provide you with the information for the specific cancellation reasons requested, the UHB would need to undertake a manual trawl of outpatient health records and cross reference with Radiology records to identify any information that may fulfil your request, as it is not recorded centrally.

The UHB can confirm that it has identified one hundred and twenty-three (123) outpatient appointments that have been cancelled by the UHB with a reason recorded as ‘Outpatient -Awaiting Diagnostics’, the code used to record the cancellation of outpatient appointments/procedures due to the patient awaiting outstanding diagnostics, during the period 1 January to 31 August 2025 alone. It is estimated that a manual search of these records would exceed the 18 hours stipulated within the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA). Based on the number of records identified, conducting a search would exceed the ‘appropriate limit’, costing the UHB the following:

123 @ 10 minutes per item = 20.5 hours
20.5 hours @ £25 per hour = £512.50

The UHB is therefore applying an exemption under Section 12 of the 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 the FoIA, this can include assisting a requestor to further refine their request.

Therefore, the UHB would be able to further consider your request if you were able to narrow down the timeframe of your request. For example, making a request for data for one month per year rather than the full year’s data etc. Refining your request by providing a smaller timeframe, would enable

the service to undertake a manual trawl of individual patient records, identifying any further information that may fulfil your request.

However, the UHB provides below, the accessible information it holds that relates to your request, that may be of use to you.

1. & 2. The UHB provides within the table below, the number of outpatient appointments/procedures cancelled by the UHB for any reason, with the codes recorded on the Welsh Patient Administration System (WPAS) as Outpatient - Awaiting Diagnostics and X-Ray unavailable, for the 2020 to 2024 calendar years and the period 1 January to 31 August 2025.

Calendar year	Outpatient - Awaiting Diagnostics	X-Ray unavailable
2020	64	5
2021	139	7
2022	248	5
2023	184	9
2024	193	3
1 January to 31 August 2025	123	1
Total	951	30

Please note: - the data provided for awaiting diagnostics is for any reason and is not specific to staff unavailability within Radiology. The data provided for X-Ray unavailable may include other radiology diagnostic tests such as MRIs.