

Reference:	FOI.21218.26
Subject:	Dentistry
Date of Request:	3 August 2026

Requested:

I am writing to request the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 regarding the waiting lists for under 16s in Hywel Dda University Health Board.

Can you please provide the information below:

1. What are the current waiting list times for children under the age of 16 to see a dentist in Hywel Dda?
2. Can you provide an estimate of the amount it would cost to train/hire new dentists to tackle the waiting lists for children not seeing a dentist under the age of 16?

Response:

1. Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) is unable to provide you with the information requested as it is not possible to provide an average waiting time for allocation. Waiting times vary considerably and are influenced by a range of factors. These include:
 - local practice capacity
 - NHS contract values
 - a patient's preferred location and travel considerations
 - whether allocation offers are accepted

Additionally, there is no separate NHS dental waiting list for children. All patients seeking access to routine NHS dental care must enrol on the Dental Access Portal (DAP) and await allocation to an NHS dental practice as capacity becomes available. Allocation is generally undertaken in chronological order from the date of registration on the Portal.

Following the introduction of the new NHS General Dental Services contract on 1 April 2026, it is anticipated that waiting times may reduce as this includes measures intended to improve access to NHS dental services and support the allocation of new patients through the DAP.

However, the UHB can confirm that twelve thousand, five hundred and thirty-one (12,531) patients were awaiting allocation through the DAP, as of 4 August 2026. Of these, three thousand, eight hundred and sixty-three (3,863) were patients under 16 years of age, with the longest wait being since July 2024.

Furthermore, since July 2025, two thousand, one hundred and eighty-two (2,182) patients under the age of 16 have been allocated to an NHS dental practice through the DAP.

2. This is not a valid request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA). The FoIA covers any recorded information that is held by a public authority; recorded information includes printed documents, computer files, letters, emails, photographs, and sound or video recordings. The FoIA does not cover information on estimates, opinions or recommendations. The UHB has an obligation to provide information already in recorded form but cannot create new information to answer a question.