

Reference:	FOI.12119.23
Subject:	Dentists and dental services
Date of Request:	5 July 2023

Requested:

1a. How many NHS registered dental practices were there in 2013?

1b. How many NHS registered dental practices were there in 2023?

2a. How many NHS registered dentists were there in 2013?

2b. How many NHS registered dentists were there in 2023?

3a. How many NHS registered dental patients were there in 2013?

3b. How many NHS registered dental patients were there in 2023?

4a. How many NHS registered dental patients were there in 2013 on a waiting list for treatment?

4b. How many NHS registered dental patients were there in 2023 on a waiting list for treatment?

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 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.

The UHB is unable to provide the data requested for question 2a. In order to access the data requested, the UHB would be required to undertake a manual trawl of all NHS dental contract performers, to identify any information that fulfils your request, as this data 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.

However, under section 16 of the FoIA, the UHB has a duty to provide advice and assistance. Therefore, the UHB provides the accessible data it holds below.

1a. & 1b. Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) provides within the table below, the number of NHS registered dental practices in the UHB’s geographical area, by county, during the 2013 calendar year and as at 10 July 2023.

County	2013	10 July 2023
Carmarthenshire	22	21
Ceredigion	10	7
Pembrokeshire	16	14

2a. Section 12 exemption applied.

2b. The UHB does not hold the information exactly as requested as it does not hold contracts with individual dentists only with the contract holder. Therefore, the UHB provides, within the table

below, the number of NHS dentists that are currently included on the UHB's NHS dental contracts, by county, as at 20 June 2023.

County	Number
Carmarthenshire	77
Ceredigion	23
Pembrokeshire	38

3a.to 4b. The UHB regrets to inform you that it does not hold the information requested.

NHS dental practices are independent businesses that hold a contract with the UHB to provide a specified amount of NHS dental activity and are provided in accordance with the NHS (General Dental Services Contracts) (Wales) Regulations 2006; since its introduction there has not been a formal registration process for NHS dentistry.

Therefore, patients are free to attend any NHS dental practice that has the capacity to accept them for NHS care. Waiting lists for most areas are held by individual dental practices and patients can be added to as many waiting lists as they wish; this is not limited to NHS dental practices within their own Health Board area.

Waiting lists held by practices are for patients to access NHS dental care rather than waiting lists for treatment; patient notes including treatment plans are the property of, and are managed by, individual dental practices not the UHB.

Claims in respect of NHS general dental services are submitted centrally to the NHS Business Services Authority when a course of treatment has been completed. Data is then provided to individual Health Boards, and it is this information that allows the relevant Health Board to monitor activity to ensure that contract metrics are being met. However, this data does not include individual patient details or provide information about any further treatment that an individual patient may be waiting for.