

Reference:	FOI.21490.26
Subject:	Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services
Date of Request:	2 September 2026

Requested:

Please could you provide the following for your Health Board for each of the last three financial years (2023/24-2025/26):

1. The number of individuals identified as drinking at increasing or higher risk levels (e.g. via AUDIT/AUDIT-C screening), or as using illicit drugs or misusing prescription medication at a problematic level, whether or not they went on to access structured treatment.
2. Of those individuals identified in point 1, the number referred into commissioned drug and alcohol treatment services, broken down by referral source (e.g. self-referral, GP, A&E, criminal justice/probation, mental health services, other).
3. Of those identified but not referred, or referred but not engaged, the number and reason recorded (e.g. declined, did not attend, below treatment threshold, no service offered).
4. Average waiting time from referral to first treatment contact.
5. Details of any digital health, cessation, or harm reduction app or self-management tool currently commissioned for addiction, substance use, gambling, or wellbeing support - including the product/provider name, contract value, contract length, and cost per head or per user licence, where not commercially sensitive.

Response:

Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) is unable to provide you with all 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 2 ½ working days) in determining whether the UHB holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

The UHB does not have a single department for patients requiring assistance and/or treatment for alcohol or drug use. Therefore, in order to provide you with the information requested, the UHB would need to undertake a manual trawl of all patient records across all of its services, during the 2023/24 to 2025/26 financial years, to identify any information that would fulfil this part of your request as it is not centrally recorded.

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.

However, 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.

The UHB suggests that you may refine your request by reducing the timeframe requested. However, the UHB would still be required undertake a manual search of all patient records across all of its services, to identify any information that would fulfil your request. Therefore, the outcome would be dependent on the number of records identified within a shorter time period.

Under the Section 45 Freedom of Information Code of Practice, the UHB has a duty to provide advice and assistance and provides the accessible information the Substance Misuse Service holds below.

1. An exemption under Section 12 of the FoIA has been applied.
2. The UHB does not hold the information exactly as requested. However, the UHB provides within the table below, the number of patients referred into commissioned drug and alcohol treatment services, by referral source, during the 2023/24 to 2025/26 financial years.
Please note: the services are commissioned in collaboration with the Dyfed Area Planning Board (APB).

Referral source	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Statutory Drug Service	32	35	37
Non-Statutory Drug Service	48	51	54
GP	172	106	77
Self	1,096	1,185	1,079
Prison	81	89	156
Youth Offending Team	*	5	*
Probation Service	421	406	286
NHS A&E	7	*	8
Psychiatry	0	0	*
Community Care Assessment	0	*	*
Offender Intervention Services	38	15	26
Social Services	142	140	144
Community Mental Health Team	107	80	88
Solicitor	0	*	*
Family/friends	34	34	38
Police	97	114	209
Educational Establishment	53	40	51
Employment Service	*	*	5
Support Agencies	373	764	565
Domestic Abuse Support	7	5	*
Court	28	27	70
Midwife	*	*	5
NHS Hospital	278	228	208
Peer Mentoring Scheme	0	0	*
SPOE	309	287	330
Unknown	*	*	9
Total	3,334	3,623	3,454

Where the figures in the table have been replaced with an asterisk (*), the UHB is unable to provide you with the exact number of patients due to the low number of cases (less than 5), as there is a potential risk of identifying individuals if this was disclosed. The UHB is therefore withholding this detail under Section 40(2) of the FoIA. This information is protected by the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA)/UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR), as its disclosure would constitute unfair

and unlawful processing and would be contrary to the principles and articles of the UK GDPR. This exemption is absolute and therefore, there is no requirement to apply the public interest test.

In reaching this decision, the DPA and UK GDPR define personal data as data that relates to a living individual who can be identified solely from that data or from that data and other information, which is in the possession of the data controller.

3. The UHB does not hold the information exactly as requested. However, the UHB provides within the table below, the number of patients that Did Not Attend (DNA) an appointment with the drug and alcohol treatment service, by the reasons recorded, during the 2023/24 to 2025/26 financial years.

Financial year	DNA - Between Referral & Assessment	DNA - Between Assessment & Treatment	DNA - During Treatment
2023/24	240	22	116
2024/25	306	13	106
2025/26	207	14	102

4. The UHB provides within the table below, the average wait time, from referral to first treatment contact, in days, for the 2023/24 to 2025/26 financial years.

Financial year	Average wait
2023/24	15 days
2024/25	16 days
2025/26	14 days

5. The UHB does not hold the information requested.