

<b>Reference:</b>	FOI.13710.24
<b>Subject:</b>	Ear wax removal services
<b>Date of Request:</b>	1 February 2024

**Requested:**

1. How many GP surgeries in Hywel Dda provided ear wax removal services in 2023?
2. How many GP surgeries in Hywel Dda provided ear wax removal services in 2010?
3. Number of patients being referred to Hywel Dda ENT for ear wax removal?
4. Number of patients in Hywel Dda A&E because of ear infections in 2023.
5. Number of patients in Hywel Dda A&E because of ear infections in 2010.

**Response:**

Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) does not hold the information for all GP Surgeries. With the exception of the Managed Practices, which are directly managed by the UHB, they are all managed independently. These GP Practices hold their own information and consequently, the UHB does not have access to all of the details you require. Therefore, this information would need to be requested directly from the individual GP Practices. Contact details for each of them can be found via the following link:

<http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/862/directory/gps/>

Additionally, the 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 Act 2000 and the Data Protection (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 data requested for question 5, the UHB would have to undertake a manual search of all Accident and Emergency (A&E) patient records, to identify the information to fulfil this part of your request, as the Welsh Patient Administration System (WPAS) has not produced any results.

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 information it holds below.

1. The UHB can confirm that none of its Managed GP Practices, namely Ashgrove Medical Centre, Meddygfa Minafon, Meddygfa’r Sarn, Solva Surgery, Tenby Surgery, and Neyland and Johnston Surgery, provided ear wax removal services during the 2023 calendar year; any patients requiring ear wax removal would have been referred to Micro suction services.

2. The UHB does not hold this information, as it did not have any Managed GP Practices during the 2010 calendar year. We therefore suggest you contact the GP surgeries directly for this information. Contact details have been provided via the link on page 1 of this letter.
3. The UHB confirms that the number of patients referred to an Ear Wax Micro suction Clinic was seven thousand, four hundred and seventeen (7,417), as recorded on the UHB's WPAS, during the 2023 calendar year.
4. The UHB confirms that four hundred and thirty-one (431) patients attended its A&E Departments with an ear infection, as recorded on the UHB's WPAS, during the 2023 calendar year.
5. Section 12 exemption applied.