

<b>Reference:</b>	FOI.18451.25
<b>Subject:</b>	Early onset dementia
<b>Date of Request:</b>	29 September 2025

**Requested:**

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act regarding services and data relating to early onset dementia (dementia diagnosed before the age of 65). I would be grateful if you could provide the following information for your Health Board:

Waiting times

1. The average waiting time (mean and median, if available) from first referral to diagnosis for patients with suspected early onset dementia, for the most recent full year of data available. Please specify the time period covered.

Patient numbers

2. The number of patients currently diagnosed with early onset dementia within your Health Board area. If available, please provide a breakdown for the past three years.

Workforce

3. The number of specialist early onset dementia nurses employed by your Health Board.
4. Whether your Health Board has any specialist nursing roles or services specifically for patients under 65 with dementia. If yes, please describe.

Beds and facilities

5. The number of inpatient beds or designated care placements available specifically for people with early onset dementia (or if none are specifically designated).

Waiting lists

6. The number of people under 65 currently waiting more than six months for a dementia assessment. If possible, please provide figures for those waiting over 12 months.

To help ensure this request is manageable, I would be grateful if you could provide the most recent data available (ideally covering the past three years, where records allow).

**Our response**

1. Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) does not record Early Onset Dementia as a diagnosis. As per Welsh Government (WG) guidelines, all patients are recorded as having a diagnosis of Dementia, which is then categorised into type, but does not include early onset.

However, the UHB can confirm that the average waiting time from referral to Dementia assessment, for all ages, across the four (4) Dementia Diagnostic Teams was ten (10) weeks, during the period 1 November 2024 to 31 October 2025.

Additionally, the UHB provides below, the current Dementia Diagnostic Pathway WG Targets and the wait times for patients aged under 65 years requiring a Dementia assessment:

- GP referrals to assessment  
WG Target - 4 weeks  
Current wait – 6 to 8 weeks, with an average of 140 assessments per month.
- GP referral to diagnosis  
WG Target - 12 weeks  
Current wait - 12 to 26 weeks

Additional assessments are expected to be undertaken for those aged under sixty-five (65) and for complex presentations, which may affect timescales.

2. The UHB does not hold the information exactly as requested, as early onset dementia is not a recorded diagnosis. However, the number of patients aged under sixty-five (65) with a diagnosis of dementia is available on the Regional Partnership Board (RPB) website.

As this information is in the public domain and is accessible by another means, the UHB has applied an exemption under Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA). The West Wales Care Partners (WWCP) Dementia Strategy is available on the RPB website and the information most relevant to your request is on page 9. For ease, a link to the Dementia Strategy has been provided below:

<https://wwwrpb.org.uk/dementia-strategy/>

Additionally, the UHB can confirm that the UHB's diagnostic rates for people aged under sixty-five (65) was 52.06% as at 31 August 2025.

Further information on the prevalence of dementia in the UHB's geographical area can be found on the WG and Stats Wales websites. The links to each webpage has been provided below:

[General practice disease registers: interactive dashboard | GOV.WALES](#)

[GMS contract](#)

3. & 4. The UHB does not employ any Specialist Early Onset Dementia Nurses. However, the UHB has four (4) Dementia Diagnostic Teams, which include Band 6 Dementia Specialist Nurses, Advanced Nurse Practitioners, an Advanced Practitioner and a Consultant Psychiatrist who work with people of all ages and suspected to have a type of Dementia. The Dementia Specialist Nurses and Advanced Practitioners assess patients across the working age, who require an assessment for suspected Dementia, including early onset.
5. The UHB does not have any dedicated beds specifically for people with Early Onset Dementia. However, a bed would be available for anyone when required, regardless of age.
6. The UHB confirms that that no patients waited over six (6) months for a Dementia assessment, during the period 1 November 2024 to 31 October 2025. The UHB can confirm that the waiting

time for a Dementia assessment within the Dementia Diagnostic Team, irrelevant of age, is approximately seven (7) weeks.