

Reference:	FOI.21449.26
Subject:	Erb's Palsy
Date of Request:	26 August 2026

Requested:

I am interested to understand how many children have been diagnosed with Erb's Palsy within Wales. I should be grateful for responses to the following queries:

1. How many children have been diagnosed with Erb's Palsy in the last 10 years?
2. How many of those children have received surgical intervention in the last 10 years?

Response:

Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) does not hold information for all Health Boards in NHS Wales and is therefore unable to provide you with all of the information requested. The UHB can only provide the information it holds.

Therefore, you would need to request the additional information from the Freedom of Information Teams in each individual Health Board. Details on the Health Boards in Wales and contact details for each of them can be found via the following link:

[Local Services - NHS Wales](#)

The 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.

In order to provide you with the information requested for question 1, the UHB would be required to undertake a manual search of birth records for the (10) year period requested, to identify any information that may fulfil this part of your request, as it is not recorded centrally.

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 to a one (1) month period e.g. April 2026. However, the UHB would still be required to undertake a manual trawl of all birth records for the refined period, to identify the information required to fulfil your request. Therefore, the outcome would be dependent on the number of records identified within a shorter time period.

Under Section 16, the UHB provides the accessible information it holds below.

1. The UHB has undertaken a search of its Welsh Patient Administration System (WPAS) which did identify inpatient children that had a recorded diagnosis of Erb's Palsy, during the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2026.

However, the UHB is unable to provide you with the exact number identified, due to the low number of cases (less than 5), as there is a potential risk of identifying individuals if this was disclosed. Therefore, the UHB is withholding these details under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (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.

2. The UHB has no records of children receiving surgical intervention for Erb's Palsy, during the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2026.

Patients requiring paediatric surgical procedures of this nature are typically referred onto the Neurology Department in Cardiff and Vale University Health Board (CAVUHB). Therefore, the UHB suggests you contact the Freedom of Information Team in CAVUHB who may be able to assist you further with this part of your request. Contact details are as follows:

FOI.Requests@wales.nhs.uk or alternatively in writing to:

Freedom of Information Team, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, Headquarters,
University Hospital for Wales, Health Park, Cardiff, CF14 4XW.