

<b>Reference:</b>	FOI.8700.22
<b>Subject:</b>	Fax machine spend
<b>Date of Request:</b>	13 April 2022

**Requested:**

Thank you all for responding to my initial FOI (8255) request in February about fax machines used within Health Boards areas. As a separate but related inquiry, would it be possible to tell me how much was spent on supplies for and maintenance of fax machines during these years at all?

For those health boards who have responded stating that they do not use fax machines currently, I will set the costs at zero.

**Response:**

Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) is unable to provide you with the information requested, as it is estimated that the cost of answering your request would exceed the “appropriate level” as stated in the Freedom of Information (Fees and Appropriate Limit) Regulations 2004. The “appropriate level” 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 data requested, all departments across all sites within the UHB would have to be contacted and asked to locate, identify and collate any information that would fulfil your request, as the UHB’s financial system records all printing costs and supplies against one code and is unable to identify fax machine supplies only.

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, 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 FoIA.

The UHB can confirm that it currently has an active project to remove all fax machines from the organisation by 2025 (when BT will be switching off the Public Switched Telephone Network). This project has commenced with Mental Health Services (MHS), where 40 fax machines have been identified for removal. The UHB is now working with the service to identify suitable alternative options i.e. secure e-mail, RightFax, Secure File Sharing Portal etc. to enable these fax machines to be decommissioned. Upon completion of the decommission within MHS, the UHB will repeat the exercise for all other service areas.