

<b>Reference:</b>	FOI.13790.24
<b>Subject:</b>	Histopathology services and outsourcing
<b>Date of Request:</b>	11 February 2024

**Requested:**

For the period April 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup> 2023, please provide the following information:

1. How many whole time equivalent histopathology consultants (as defined by being on the GMC specialist register for pathology) were employed by the authority at 31/12/2023.
2. How many histology cases were reported in the following period, overall and by the following sub-specialties
  - dermatology
  - gastro-intestinal
  - urology
  - gynaecology
  - breast
  - thoracic
  - head and neck
  - other
  - total cases reported
3. How many of the total cases given above were reported by:
  - a. consultants (or other medical staff) employed by the authority during their contract Programmed Activities or PAs.
  - b. consultants employed by the authority, being paid additional amounts over and above their salary for additional work.
  - c. locum consultants working for the authority
  - d. external reporting companies. Please provide a total number of cases and the number reported by each of the following:
    - Unilabs
    - HCA Laboratories including their subsidiary Backlogs
    - Source LD Path (previously Source Bioscience, and LD Path limited)
    - Cellular Pathology Services Limited
    - Diagnexia
    - Digital Pathology Partners
    - Cytel (including their subsidiary Pathognomics)
    - Poundbury Cancer Institute
    - Medica
    - external reporting companies total
4. How much did the authority spend on each of the following during the period:
  - a. Consultants (or other medical staff) employed by the authority during their contract Programmed Activities or PAs. (salary plus NI plus pension contribution)
  - b. Consultants employed by the authority, being paid additional amounts over and above their salary for additional work.
  - c. Locum consultants working for the authority
  - d. External reporting companies.

5. Please provide a total spend and the spend with each of the following:

- Unilabs
- HCA Laboratories including their subsidiary Backlogs
- Source LD Path (previously Source Bioscience, and LD Path limited)
- Cellular Pathology Services Limited
- Diagnexia
- Digital Pathology Partners
- Cytel (including their subsidiary Pathognomics)
- Poundbury Cancer Institute
- Medica
- External reporting companies total

**Response:**

Hywel Dda University Health Board (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 and 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.

The UHB does not centrally record the information requested for questions 2 and 3. Therefore, in order to provide you with the data requested, the UHB would need to undertake a manual trawl of raw data to analyse the information held to fulfil these parts of your request, as the data is not easily accessible.

The UHB can confirm that it received 15,374 Histology cases, during the period 1 April to 31 December 2023. Therefore, to provide you with the exact information being requested, conducting the search would far exceed the ‘appropriate limit’, costing the UHB the following:

15,374 @ 15 minutes per item = 3,843.50 hours  
3,843.50 hours @ £25 per hour = £96,087.50

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 the FoIA. Therefore, the UHB provides the accessible information it holds below.

1. The UHB confirms that two (2) Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) Histopathology Consultants were employed, as at 31 December 2023.
2. & 3. Section 12 exemption applied.
4. The UHB provides, within the table below, the total spend requested at a. to d., during the period 1 April to 31 December 2023.

	<b>Spend</b>
a. Programmed Activities (medical)	£339,918.00
b. Additional work	£87,708.00
c. Locum consultants	£519,580.00
d. External reporting companies	£0.00

5. Please see response to 4d.