

Reference:	FOI.8116.22
Subject:	Hospital infection data
Date of Request:	31 January 2022

Requested:

I would like to request the following information under the Freedom of Information Act:

- The number of deaths in the health board's hospitals of patients involving Covid-19 as a result of hospital onset infection – "probable" onset and "definite" onset – from 1 October 2021 to 31 January 2022.
- If available, to provide a breakdown of hospital sites where deaths occurred and by month.

Response:

The UHB considers that this information is exempt under Section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA), which states that information is exempt if it is intended that the information held by the public authority will be published at a future date.

This exemption is qualified and therefore, if information falls within Section 22, public authorities must apply a public interest test.

The information can only be withheld if the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

The UHB has therefore considered the following:

In favour of disclosure: There is a public interest in the UHB being open and transparent. The COVID-19 pandemic and contraction of the virus, especially in the case of hospital transmissions is a popular topic of discussion, with a significant amount of public interest. Due to the interest in the topic, it is within everyone's interests that information is shared and that the public be kept informed of developments, to reduce anxieties within our communities.

Against Disclosure: The information being requested is currently under review and is therefore incomplete. Disclosure at this time could lead to anxiety in communities and due to the strong opinions of the handling of the pandemic, disclosure of the current information could attract negative opinion. It is the UHB's opinion that providing information before it has been fully validated could cause the public's anxieties to become exacerbated and cause further anger, which in turn, could harm the UHB's relationship with its communities.

Decision: - The UHB considers that the public interest in withholding the requested information at this time is greater than the interest in disclosing it, as the attention drawn from the disclosure could cause harm to the UHB and it is therefore applying a Section 22 exemption.

The UHB is currently in the process of reviewing the hospital acquired COVID-19 infections, in line with the NHS Wales National Framework for the Management of Patient Safety Incidents. On completion of the review, the report will be published on the UHB's website, with all updates in relation to the ongoing review being presented at the Quality Safety and Experience Committee meetings, with the details being published on the UHB's webpage, which can be accessed via the link below:

[Quality Safety and Experience Committee \(QSEC\) - Hywel Dda University Health Board \(nhs.wales\)](#)

[The most recent update](#) on the review of Nosocomial COVID-19 Infections and other COVID-19 related matters, was presented at the UHB's QSEC meeting on the 8 February 2022.

For ease of reference, please click on the attached link, which will take you directly to the UHB's August's review paper:

[Health & Care Standards Fundamentals of Care Annual Audit Report \(nhs.wales\)](#)

Furthermore, whilst operating in accordance with the Section 45 Freedom of Information Code of Practice, the UHB has a duty to provide advice and assistance.

Information on COVID-19 infection onset is already within the public domain and therefore, the UHB has applied an exemption under Section 21 of the FoIA, as the information is accessible by another means. The information is available on the Coronavirus data dashboard on the Public Health Wales (PHW) website.

For ease of reference, please click on the attached link which will take you directly to the PHW COVID-19 webpage, where all information submitted to PHW can be viewed:

[New Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) data dashboard launched - Public Health Wales \(nhs.wales\)](#)