

<b>Reference:</b>	FOI.8051.22
<b>Subject:</b>	Hydrotherapy and Aquatic Physiotherapy
<b>Date of Request:</b>	24 January 2022

**Request and response:**

Freedom of Information Request

Aquatic Physiotherapy (Hydrotherapy) Provision in the United Kingdom

**ACCESS TO AQUATIC PHYSIOTHERAPY**

1. On behalf of which NHS Trust / Health Board are you responding?

Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB)

2. Does your Trust / Health Board have access to a hydrotherapy pool?

☒ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not anymore

The UHB covers three counties, Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire. The UHB has a NHS hydro pool in Glangwili General Hospital (GGH), Carmarthenshire, the Local Authority's (LA) leisure centre pool is utilised in Pembrokeshire and there is no hydrotherapy pool available in Ceredigion. The UHB also delivers a service via a Service Level Agreement (SLA) at Portfield School, Pembrokeshire for children with special needs based within the area.

3. If you do have access are your hydrotherapy pools onsite or offsite? (Tick all that apply)

☒ Onsite

☐ Offsite (NHS Facility)

☒ Offsite (Non NHS Facility)

4. Were all your hydrotherapy pools open prior to the COVID-19 pandemic?

☒ Yes

☐ No

5. If you do not have access to hydrotherapy pools, please tick all answers that apply to answer why that is.

- ☐ Closed Due to COVID-19
- ☐ Lack of funds
- ☐ Insufficient space
- ☐ No local pool available
- ☐ Not enough adequately trained staff
- ☐ Lack of appropriate local patient population
- ✓ Other (please specify)

The UHB has limited access to hydrotherapy in Ceredigion as there are no suitable facilities in the NHS or LA. Patients are able to access other sites in the UHB if they are prepared to and happy to travel.

6. How many hydrotherapy pools exist on your NHS Trust / Board's estate? Include those closed prior to COVID-19.

The UHB confirms that it currently has one (1) hydrotherapy pool in GGH. However, the UHB has plans to develop a second facility in the Pentre Awel Project in Llanelli, Carmarthenshire.

7. What are your closed hydrotherapy pools / departments now used for?

Not applicable.

#### REOPENING OF HYDROTHERAPY POOLS

8. Will all your hydrotherapy pools be re-opening?

- ✓ Yes, they are already open
- ☐ Yes, there are plans to reopen
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not sure / don't know

9. When are your hydrotherapy pools scheduled to re-open?

- ☐ Within 3 months
- ☐ Within 6 months
- ☐ Within 9 months
- ☐ Within 12 months
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Not applicable.

10. If your hydrotherapy pools are not scheduled to reopen, why is that? *(Please select all that apply)*

- ☐ Changing area capacity
- ☐ Staffing to clean
- ☐ Access to pool
- ☐ Staff still redeployed
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Not applicable.

11. If your hydrotherapy pools are not scheduled to reopen, has a full public consultation taken place?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☒ Not applicable

12. If your hydrotherapy pools are not scheduled to reopen has an equality impact assessment taken place?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☒ Not applicable

### OPERATING HYDROTHERAPY POOLS

13. If your hydrotherapy pools are open or scheduled to open is / will your aquatic physiotherapy (hydrotherapy) service capacity be reduced as a result of COVID-19?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No

14. What capacity are / will you be able to offer compared to pre pandemic?  
Please enter a percentage (%).

The UHB confirms that the current capacity being offered compared to pre pandemic is 25-50%. The range is variable due to the different challenges at each site.

15. Is / will your service be provided on a 1:1 basis?

- ☒ Yes,
- ☐ No we can take more than 1 patient in the pool at a time.

Please note:- There can be more than one (1) patient supported at a time in line with local infection control guidelines. Group work is supported in line with clinical need.

16. Is / will your service be provided with the therapist instructing from poolside

☐ Yes

✓ No our therapist is able to treat from within the pool

17. Approximately how many sessions did you have access to your hydrotherapy pools on a weekly basis pre pandemic? (Where one session = one morning, afternoon or evening clinic)

The UHB confirms that pre pandemic it offered nine (9) sessions in GGH, one (1) session in Pembrokeshire LA facility and 1 session in Portfield School, Pembrokeshire as part of a SLA.

18. Approximately how many sessions do you currently have access to your hydrotherapy pools on a weekly basis?

The UHB confirms that the current access is the same as pre pandemic.

19. Which services use your hydrotherapy pools?

✓ Rheumatology

✓ MSK

✓ Orthopaedics

✓ Neurology

✓ Paediatrics

✓ Other (please specify)

The UHB also utilises hydrotherapy pools for the Learning Disability Services.

20. Are your hydrotherapy pools used by inpatient or outpatient services?

☐ Inpatients only

✓ Outpatients only

☐ Both inpatients and outpatients

21. Prior to the pandemic did you provide out of hours access to your hydrotherapy pools to patient groups or private groups? e.g. NASS, Private Clinics (Please provide a list)

☐ Yes

✓ No

22. Have these sessions restarted? (Please provide a list of those which have restarted)

☐ Yes

☐ No

Not applicable.

23. Do you currently audit the use and effectiveness of aquatic physiotherapy (hydrotherapy)?

☐ Yes

✓ No

24. Please list outcome measures or tools used to audit the use and effectiveness of aquatic physiotherapy (hydrotherapy)?

The UHB confirms that it does not currently have an audit process in hydrotherapy linked specifically with validated outcome measures. Outcome measures are utilised in clinical practice and vary across sites and specialties. They are primarily utilised as part of 1:1 evaluation of clinical effectiveness in conjunction with patient centred goal planning, using tools which include Musculoskeletal Health Questionnaires (MSK-HQ) and Measure Yourself Medical Outcome Profile (MYMOP).

25. If you are happy to be contacted for further information to support aquatic physiotherapy (hydrotherapy) services remobilise please provide an email address below.

The UHB confirms that contact details are as follows:-  
John Davies, Head of Physiotherapy Services - [John.davies@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:John.davies@wales.nhs.uk)