

<b>Reference:</b>	FOI.3168.20
<b>Subject:</b>	In-patient mental health care and coronavirus
<b>Date of Request:</b>	6 May 2020

**Requested:**

I am writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to request the following information about in-patient mental health care during coronavirus:

1. Within the in-patient facilities that fall under your remit, how many patients have contracted coronavirus and/or are suspected to have contracted coronavirus? Of that number, how many have died?  
Please provide data over the broadest timeframe you can, within the cost limits of the Freedom of Information Act. Please also provide dates of patients' deaths. If that would identify them, please provide the week they died or, if that would still identify them, the month. I understand that most patients with severe coronavirus will have been transferred to acute units, if that helps with your search. Please also provide me with a rough figure of the total number of in-patients your facilities support.
2. Since 1 March, what policies/procedures have your in-patient facilities put in place to deal with coronavirus? Please provide dates of enactment. Such policies/procedures might include (but are not limited to): asking providers to release patients early where possible; cancelling leave for in-patients; suspending advocacy services; stopping legal hearings; preventing patient readmissions; separating patients (whether through segregation or other forms).  
In situations where patients were released early, please, if possible, provide a total number. I understand that some policies may have been enacted and then retracted, therefore please provide dates for when they came into effect and were undone. Please also provide documentation, where possible, for the relevant policies/procedures.
3. Since 1 March, what guidance have you received from NHS Wales, Public Health Wales, the Welsh Government and/or the UK's Department of Health and Social Care around how to manage coronavirus within in-patient mental health settings? Please provide the documentation you received, be it emails or formal documents, and the dates when you received it.

**Response:**

1. Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) confirms no mental health in-patients have contracted coronavirus at the time of your request.
2. The UHB confirms all inpatient units stopped accepting visitors from 24 March 2020 and some leave under the Section 17 - Leave of Absence policy was revoked. Leave granted under the Section 17 policy for patients on long term leave to home or placements continued. Some leave continued for those patients on sites where there are no general hospitals and leave could only be taken outside working hours. Leave and visiting arrangements were reviewed on 28 April 2020, a copy of the guidance has been provided, Attachment 1.

The UHB has not prevented or cancelled any Hospital Managers applications or renewals during Covid-19, hearings have continued through online communication. The UHB also confirms there has been no suspension of advocacy services to patients.

3. This information is already within the public domain; therefore, Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) has applied an exemption under Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, as the information is accessible by another means.

For ease of reference please click on the attached links which will take you directly to the policies and documents:

Section 17 – Leave of Absence policy

<http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/862/FOI382a18.pdf>

Mental Health Casework Section (MHCS) update: Covid-19

[http://www.mentalhealthlaw.co.uk/media/2020-03-19\\_MHCS\\_stakeholder\\_update\\_COVID-19.pdf](http://www.mentalhealthlaw.co.uk/media/2020-03-19_MHCS_stakeholder_update_COVID-19.pdf)

Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW), review service for Mental Health during Covid-19

<https://hiw.org.uk/review-service-mental-health-during-covid-19>

Welsh Government (WG) Guidance for local health boards and independent hospitals on discharge powers under the Mental Health Act 1983

<https://gov.wales/mental-health-guidance-hospital-managers-covid-19-html>

Department of Health & Social Care guidance for hospitals, care homes and supervisory bodies [v0.1]

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/878910/Emergency\\_MCA\\_DoLS\\_Guidance\\_COVID19.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/878910/Emergency_MCA_DoLS_Guidance_COVID19.pdf)

Mental Health Review Tribunal Wales (MHRTW) practice direction, coronavirus, Covid-19

<https://mentalhealthreviewtribunal.gov.wales/sites/mentalhealthreview/files/2020-04/Practice%20Direction%20COVID-19.pdf>