

Reference:	FOI.15928.24
Subject:	Locum Psychiatrists
Date of Request:	8 November 2024

Requested:

In relation to your supply of locum Psychiatrists for each grade and sub-specialty per month, please could you provide the answers to the requests below for the following periods?

- Financial year 2022/2023
- Financial year 2023/2024
- April - September 2024

1. Please confirm the total number of vacancy requirements given out to framework and non-framework agencies for each agency
2. Please confirm the total number of shifts given out to framework and non-framework agencies for each agency
3. Please confirm the total number of agency locum doctors working per month, for each agency supplier divided between on and off framework.
4. Please confirm the total number of hours worked by agency locum doctors per month, for each agency supplier divided between on and off framework.
5. Please confirm the total number of unfilled vacancies (excluding locum filled posts) per month.

Response:

Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) is unable to provide you with the information requested for question 2, as it is estimated that the cost of answering your request would exceed the “appropriate limit” as stated in the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the 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.

Due to multiple system changes during the requested timeframe, the UHB does not hold a central record of the number of shifts given to agencies during the stated period and would need to undertake a manual trawl of records to identify the information requested.

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, the UHB has a duty to provide advice and assistance. Therefore, the UHB provides the accessible information it holds below.

1. The UHB does not hold the information requested, as it does not store a complete record of historical vacancies advertised for filling by agencies.

2. Section 12 applied.

3. The UHB is unable to provide you with the number of agency locum doctors per agency due to the low numbers, as there is a potential risk of identifying individuals if this was disclosed. The UHB is therefore withholding this detail under Section 40(2) of the FoIA. This information is protected by the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA)/UK General Data Protection Regulations, as its disclosure would constitute unfair and unlawful processing and would be contrary to the principles and articles of the UK GDPR. This exemption is absolute and therefore, there is no requirement to apply the public interest test.

In reaching this decision, the DPA and UK GDPR define personal data as data that relates to a living individual who can be identified solely from that data or from that data and other information, which is in the possession of the data controller.

4. The UHB is unable to provide the number of hours worked by agency doctors per agency, due to the low number of individuals this information relates to, as there is a potential risk of identifying individuals if this was disclosed. The UHB is therefore also withholding this detail under Section 40(2) of the FoIA. This information is protected by the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA)/UK General Data Protection Regulations, as its disclosure would constitute unfair and unlawful processing and would be contrary to the principles and articles of the UK GDPR. This exemption is absolute and therefore, there is no requirement to apply the public interest test.

In reaching this decision, the DPA and UK GDPR define personal data as data that relates to a living individual who can be identified solely from that data or from that data and other information, which is in the possession of the data controller.

However, in accordance with the Section 45 Freedom of Information Code of Conduct, the UHB provides within the table below its expenditure on agency locum Psychiatrists during the 2022/23, 2023/24 financial years and from 1 April 2024 – 31 October 2024 (2024/25). Please note that this expenditure relates to on-framework agency usage.

Financial year	Expenditure
2022/23	£708,682.85
2023/24	£453,926.06
2024/25	£245,263.25

5. The UHB only holds this information from 1 November 2023, the table below provides the number of unfilled vacancies per month.

Job title	Comments
Consultant in Community General Adult Psychiatry	Advertised October 2024.
Consultant in Community General Adult Psychiatry - South Ceredigion	Advertised October 2024
Consultant in Community General Psychiatry - South Pems	Advertised October 2024
Consultant in Psychiatry for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities	Advertised November 2023 and remains unfilled.
Locum Consultant in Acute Adult Psychiatry - Inpatient and CRHT	Advertised November and December 2023 – recruited into Speciality doctor position

Locum Consultant in Community General Adult Psychiatry	Advertised September and October 2024.
Locum Consultant in ND & LD SCAMHS	Advertised April 2024 – recruited
Locum Consultant in Psychiatry for Adults with LD	Advertised November 2023 and remains unfilled