

<b>Reference:</b>	FOI.9274.22
<b>Subject:</b>	Long COVID
<b>Date of Request:</b>	29 June 2022

**Requested:**

Please could you provide me with:

1. The number of Hywel Dda UHB staff absent due to Long Covid as of July 2022, broken down by staff group (Doctors, nurses, midwives etc.).
2. How many of these staff members have been absent for
  - a. a month
  - b. two months
  - c. six months
  - d. more than a year.
3. The number of Hywel Dda UHB staff absent due to Long Covid who are on COVID-related sick pay (as detailed [here](#)) as of 29<sup>th</sup> June 2022, with details of the number of absent staff on full and half pay.

**Response:**

Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) is unable to provide you with the requested information, 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 2 ½ working days) in determining whether the UHB holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

The UHB’s Electronic Staff Record (ESR) system does not have an absence reason of Long Covid. In order to provide you with the data being requested, the UHB would need to undertake a search of all COVID-19 related absences recorded on the UHB’s ESR system and cross reference the staff members identified with their ‘Return to Work’ Absence Review Forms, which are completed by the line manager and stored within departmental filing systems, to identify if any of the information required was recorded.

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 FoIA. Therefore, by utilising the available data in the ESR system, the UHB provides the information for questions 1 to 3 below.

1. The UHB provides, within the table below, the number of staff identified as being on a period of long-term sickness, recorded as a Covid related absence, by staff group, as at 1 July 2022.

<b>Staff Group</b>	<b>Number of staff absent (headcount)</b>
Additional Professional Scientific and Technical e.g. Pharmacist / Healthcare Scientists	*
Additional Clinical Services e.g. Health Care Support Workers / Technicians	11
Administrative & Clerical e.g. Administrators / Managers	6
Allied Health Professionals e.g. Therapists / Radiographers / Operating Department Practitioners	*
Estates and Ancillary e.g. Maintenance / Porters / Catering staff / Domestic staff	8
Medical and Dental e.g. Doctors / Dentists	*
Nursing and Midwifery e.g. Nurses / Midwives	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>

Where the figures in the table have been replaced with an asterisk (\*), the UHB is unable to provide you with the exact number of staff members, due to the low number of cases (5 and under), 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 Freedom of information Act 2000 (FoIA).

This information is protected by the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR), as its disclosure would constitute unfair and unlawful processing and would be contrary to the principles and articles 6 and 9 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 Data Protection Act 2018/UK GDPR define personal data as data which 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.

2. The UHB provides, within the table below, the number of those staff members identified in response to question 1, by the absence durations requested, as at 1 July 2022.

<b>Duration</b>	<b>Number</b>
One (1) month	9
Two (2) months	16
Six (6) months	11
More than one (1) year	9

3. The UHB confirms that forty two (42) members of staff were recorded as receiving full sickness absence pay and three (3) members of staff were recorded as receiving half sickness absence pay, due to being on a period of long-term sickness recorded as a Covid related absence, as at 29 June 2022.