

<b>Reference:</b>	FOI.8650.22
<b>Subject:</b>	Medical abortion and Evacuation of Retained Products of Conception (ERPC)
<b>Date of Request:</b>	6 April 2022

**Requested:**

1. What proportion (or number) of women presenting for a medical abortion took
  - a. both pills at the clinic
  - b. one pill at the clinic and one at home and
  - c. both pills at home, for each of the past 5 years?
2. How many
  - a. ERPC (Evacuation of Retained Products of Conception) procedures and
  - b. how many women presented with RPOC (Retained Products of Conception) for each of the past 5 years?

**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 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.

Several procedures, including Evacuation of Retained Products of Conception (ERPC), Retained Products of Conception (RPOC) and miscarriage etc. are recorded in the UHB's Welsh Patient Administration System (WPAS) under the same code. Therefore, in order to provide you with the information requested, the UHB would need to undertake a manual search of all of those patient records, for the requested period of five (5) years, to identify the information that would fulfil your request, as the data is not recorded separately.

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, the UHB provides the accessible information it holds for question 1 below.

1. The UHB confirms all women received both pills at a clinic prior to March 2020. From April 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Welsh Government (WG) temporarily introduced medical terminations at home and a small number of women, approximately 2%, attended a clinic for a scan and chose to take the mifepristone on site, with approximately 98% taking both pills at home. The WG made this arrangement permanent on 24 February 2022; therefore, the process of taking both pills at home will be continuing.