

Reference:	FOI.19928.26
Subject:	Medical intervention
Date of Request:	19 March 2026

Requested:

Follow on from FOI.19575

However, it is just marketing material that makes assertions but which offers no evidence sufficient to justify relying on it.

Please can you send me all documents including internal papers and emails that relate in any way to the decision to rely on marketing material when communicating to the public about medical interventions?

Clarified:

My concern and request relate to a letter that you sent me telling me that the proposed vaccination was safe.

This unqualified statement is a very strong statement to make in relation to a medical intervention.

As I am sure you are aware, it is usual for all other medical interventions to warn the patient about risks and side effects.

Consequently, my request, as originally set out, was for all documents that you relied on in making the claim that the vaccine was safe, without any reservation or notification of risks.

In response you sent me a marketing brochure, not a medical proof.

Consequently, I am still seeking all documents related to the internal decision making process whereby the decision was made to rely on a marketing brochure and not on hard scientific evidence.

There must be an email trail setting out the decision to base your communication on this brochure, please supply that.

Response:

Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) is unable to provide you with the requested information as it is not held. The influenza vaccination programme is a national programme with Local Health Boards responsible for ensuring the delivery of influenza vaccinations within their own catchment areas, in adherence with correspondence and guidance issued by Welsh Government (WG), including Welsh Health Circulars (WHCs).

On 5 June 2025, the UHB received the following WHC: WHC/2025/020, *The National Influenza Immunisation Programme 2025 to 2026*, which set out the guidance to be followed.

Following the publication of the WHC, the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) for Wales issued a letter in December 2025 to the Directors of Education based within the Local Authorities, regarding the childhood influenza vaccination programme. This correspondence set out required actions and

requested that the Directors circulate the information to head teachers at schools, in order to support the promotion of vaccination uptake.

Within the CMO's letter to the Directors of Education, it was stated that local authorities should:

'Work closely with their local health board representatives to support any pending visits or plan for follow up visits and wider mitigating action as needed.'

In accordance with this guidance, the UHB was responsible for establishing and arranging pop-up flu vaccination clinics. As part of this exercise, additional pop-up clinics were arranged to provide a further opportunity for individuals who had not received a vaccination, or who were unable to attend during the initial rollout of the vaccine.

Once pop-up clinics were arranged, the UHB shared the relevant clinic information with PHW, who are responsible for identifying eligible individuals. These details are then shared with Digital Health and Care Wales (DHCW) who are responsible for preparing and issuing invitation letters on behalf of Welsh Local Health Boards. The UHB does therefore not hold any information regarding the development or approval of the letter as this was prepared at a national level.

When an individual attends the influenza vaccination clinic, a consent form is provided which includes key information relating to the vaccine. Any questions can be addressed by the healthcare professional administering the vaccination. In the case of school-based vaccination clinics, the consent form includes a section for parents and/or carers to record any questions or concerns. Where questions or queries are raised, the school nursing teams will make direct contact with the parents and/or carers in advance of the clinic to provide further information and answer any specific questions.

If further information or clarification is required in relation to the preparation of the invitation letters or the rationale for these communications, the UHB recommends that you redirect your request to the Freedom of Information Teams at WG, PHW and Digital Health and Care Wales (DHCW) who may be able to help you with your enquiry. Contact details are as follows:

- Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales or alternatively, you can contact: Freedom of Information Officer, Information Rights Unit, Welsh Government, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ
- phw.foi@wales.nhs.uk or alternatively, you can contact: Freedom of Information Office, Public Health Wales, 2 Capital Quarter, Tyndall Street, Cardiff, CF10 4BZ.
- DHCW.FOI@wales.nhs.uk, or alternatively, you can contact: Digital Health and Care Wales, Ty Glan-yr-Afon, 21 Cowbridge Road East, Cardiff, CF11 9AD

Supporting information relating to the childhood influenza vaccination programme is also published on the Public Health Wales (PHW) website.

The UHB has applied a Section 21 exemption of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) to the WHC and CMO letter, as the information requested is already within the public domain and is accessible by another means.

For ease of reference, please click on the links provided below, which will take you directly to the WHC, PHW webpage and CMO letter:

[The national influenza immunisation programme 2025 to 2026 \(WHC/2025/020\) | GOV.WALES](#)

[Childhood influenza vaccination programme - Public Health Wales](#)

[Chief Medical Officer for Wales letter to Directors of Education](#)

Furthermore, the UHB also adheres to the Green Book and guidance issued by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI). Information regarding the safety and effectiveness of the influenza vaccination is provided within these national publications. Details on Influenza can be found in Chapter 19 of the Green Book, for ease, a link has been provided below:

[Green Book Chapter 19 Influenza](#)