

Reference:	FOI.20819.26
Subject:	Orthopaedic operations
Date of Request:	18 June 2026

Requested:

In order to help me understand how Hywel Dda has reached this situation could you please , under the freedom of information act regarding Delivery of Service, provide me with the following information,

1. How many elective orthopaedic operations were carried out in Wthybush Hospital in January, February, March April and May of this year.
2. How many are planned for the next twelve months.
3. How many people are on the waiting list for Orthopaedic operations in Pembrokeshire on the 18th of July 2026.
4. How many people are on the waiting list for Orthopaedic operations in the area covered by Hywel Dda health authority
5. Please supply all internal reports where delivery of orthopaedic services have been discussed and the responses to these discussions.
6. Please supply the current policies and reasons that refuse any patient in the remit of Hywel Dda to seek treatment outside the boards control if that patient can receive treatment in a more timely manner.
7. Please supply the salaries of all Hywel Dda board members, including pension contributions and the time served on the board.

Clarification

Question 3 - if you could supply the number of people on the orthopaedic waiting list that would be perfect.

Response:

Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) is unable to provide you with the information requested for question 5, 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 (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.

In order to provide you with the information requested, the UHB would need to undertake a trawl of all a large number of documents, which would be held across multiple departments, committees and management structures, to identify any information that would fulfil your request, as this is not recorded centrally.

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 the FoIA, which can include assisting a requestor to further refine their request.

The UHB suggests that you may refine your request by providing a specific timeframe in which reports may have been produced. Additionally, you could refine your request by providing a specific aspect of orthopaedic service delivery. However, the UHB would still be required to undertake a trawl to find any relevant reports.

1. The UHB provides within the table below, the number of elective orthopaedic operations undertaken at Worthy General Hospital (WGH), during the period 1 January to 31 May 2026.

Month	Number
January	31
February	50
March	31
April	39
May	43
Total	194

2. The UHB does not hold the information requested as the number of procedures completed within a theatre session can vary significantly depending on the complexity and case mix of patients listed. For example: a theatre session may accommodate several less complex procedures or a small number of more complex procedures. However, the UHB intends to continue delivering elective Orthopaedic surgeries at WGH in line with its core funded theatre sessions, maximising activity within available capacity and Consultant job plans.

Furthermore, arrangements are in place to support continuity of elective activity through collaborative working across hospital sites. This includes the backfilling of theatre sessions at WGH by Carmarthenshire based Orthopaedic Consultants when WGH Consultants are undertaking inpatient surgical activity at Prince Philip Hospital (PPH).

3. The UHB does not hold the information exactly as requested, as it does not hold a waiting list specifically for Trauma and Orthopaedic (T&O) operations to be undertaken within Pembrokeshire. Therefore, the UHB confirms there were one thousand, two hundred and twenty-six (1,226) patients on the T&O waiting list, who had been referred following an assessment at a Pembrokeshire based outpatient setting, as at 30 July 2026.

Where a patient's surgery is undertaken is determined by a range of operational and clinical factors and this may differ from the location that the patient was assessed. For example: elective inpatient Orthopaedic surgery is not routinely undertaken at WGH, and patients requiring inpatient procedures would generally receive treatment at another UHB site. Additionally, some patients assessed at outpatient clinics outside of Pembrokeshire may subsequently undergo surgery at WGH, when elective theatre sessions are available and supported through cross-site working arrangements.

4. The UHB confirms that five thousand, nine hundred and fifty-two (5,952) patients were recorded as awaiting an Orthopaedic procedure, as at 30 July 2026. This figure represents patients who have completed the relevant assessments and diagnostic stages and were recorded as being at Stage 4 (awaiting surgery) of the patient pathway.
5. Section 12 exemption of the FoIA applied.
6. The UHB adheres to the All-Wales Prior Approval Policy which details the criteria and guiding principles. A copy of this policy can be found at Attachment 1.

Within the All-Wales Policy under subsection 1.2.5, it states:

“A prior approval is normally defined as a request for a patient to receive routine treatment outside of local services or established contractual arrangements. Such a request will normally fall within one of the following categories: -

- *Second opinion*
- *Lack of local/commissioned service provision/expertise*
- *Clinical continuity of care (considered on a case-by-case basis)*
- *Transfer back to the NHS following self-funding in the private sector*
- *Re-referral following a previous tertiary referral*
- *Students*
- *Veterans*

Further detail is provided in Section 5.”

However, the Policy states that patients should not be able to access healthcare services elsewhere, unless all treatment options available within locally provided services or those commissioned by Health Boards have been exhausted and it is clinically appropriate to do so with the support of a secondary care Consultant.

Additionally, the policy does not apply to the following factors, noted under subsection 4.3:

- *Non-clinical factors (such as employment status) will not be considered when making decisions on prior approval requests.*
- *Waiting time factors will not be considered when considering prior approvals as this will theoretically prioritise some patients over others who are in the same clinical position.*
- *Patient choice. The NHS in Wales does not operate a system of patient choice.*

Furthermore, a copy of the Funding for Planned Treatment in Europe – UK S2 Planned Treatment Guidance Notes have been provided at Attachment 2. The S2 application is for residents of Wales who want to receive planned treatment in an EU country, this is also known as the S2 funding route and patients must submit a S2 application and obtain approval before travel.

Within the guidance notes, it details the qualifying criteria and one element that must be satisfied is “undue delay”, which must be based on an NHS clinical assessment of what is a medically acceptable waiting time for the individual clinical circumstances of the patient, including their condition and diagnosis. This assessment would be kept under review whilst the patient is waiting for treatment.

All requests are considered to ensure they are in line with the policy and clinical decisions made.

7. The UHB has applied an exemption under Section 21 of the FoIA to some of the requested information, as it is already in the public domain and is accessible by another means.

Information on the Board Members' salaries, including pension contributions for the 2025/26 financial year is in the UHB's Annual Report and Accounts, which is available on the UHB's website.

The salaries and pension contributions are available on pages 190 - 191 of the Annual Reports and Accounts 2025/26.

For ease of reference, a link to the report has been provided below:

hduhb.nhs.wales/about-us/your-health-board/board-meetings-2026/annual-general-meeting-30-july-2026/agm-papers-30-july-2026/download-our-2025-2026-annual-report-opens-in-new-tab/?ts=1785937217337

Furthermore, the UHB provides within the table below, the number of years each Board Member has served on the Board, as at 5 August 2026.

Board Member	Role	Time Served
Phil Kloer	Medical Director	8 years, 7 months (no longer in role)
	Chief Executive Officer	2 years, 6 months
Lisa Gostling	Executive Director of Workforce and Organisation Development	12 years
	Deputy Chief Executive	1 year, 8 months
Ardiana Gjini	Executive Director of Public Health	3 years, 1 month
Andrew Carruthers	Chief Operating Officer	6 years, 7 months
Huw Thomas	Executive Director of Finance	7 years, 11 months
James Severs	Executive Director of Allied Health Professions and Health Science	2 years, 8 months
Lee Davies	Executive Director of Strategy and Planning	5 years, 3 months
Mark Henwood	Interim Executive Medical Director	1 year, 3 months (no longer interim)
	Executive Medical Director	1 year, 2 months
Sharon Daniel	Interim Executive Director of Nursing, Quality & Patient Experience	1 year, 3 months (no longer interim)
	Executive Director of Nursing, Quality & Patient Experience	1 year, 4 months
Dr Neil Wooding	Chair	2 years, 2 months
Eleanor Marks	Vice Chair	2 years, 6 months
Neil Prior	Independent Member (Community)	7 months
Sarah Harraway	Independent Member (Community)	1 year, 3 months
Winston Weir	Independent Member (Finance)	5 years, 4 months
Chantal Patel	Independent Member (University)	4 years

Maynard Davies	Independent Member (Information Technology)	6 years, 8 months
Ann Murphy	Independent Member (Trade Union)	6 years, 6 months
Iwan Thomas	Independent Member (Third Sector)	5 years, 3 months
Cllr Rhodri Evans	Independent Member (Local Authority)	3 years, 8 months
Michael Imperato	Independent Member (Legal)	2 years, 11 months