

Reference:	FOI.19618.26
Subject:	Patient confidentiality breaches
Date of Request:	16 February 2026

Requested:

Please provide the following information in relation to Cardiff and Vale University health board, with the information broken down into individual health boards:

1. The total number of patient confidentiality breaches (including data breaches or unauthorised disclosures of patient information) recorded in each of the last five financial years.
2. A breakdown of these breaches by financial year.
3. Where recorded, the general category of breach (for example: human error, lost paperwork, IT-related incident, unauthorised access).
4. The number of breaches in each year that were reported to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).
5. The number of members of staff who were formally investigated for an alleged breach of patient confidentiality in each of the last five financial years.
6. Where recorded, the number of those investigations that resulted in:
 - No further action
 - Informal action or retraining
 - Formal disciplinary action

Response:

Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) does not hold information for Cardiff and Vale University Health Board (CAVUHB). Each Health Board in NHS Wales holds their own information. Therefore, should you require the information for CAVUHB, please re-direct your request to the Freedom of Information team in CAVUHB who will be able to assist you further. Contact details are as follows:

FOI.Requests@wales.nhs.uk or alternatively in writing to:

Freedom of Information Team, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, Headquarters, University Hospital for Wales, Health Park, Cardiff, CF14 4XW.

However, the UHB can provide the information it holds in relation to your request.

The UHB is unable to provide you with all the information requested for questions 1 to 4, 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.

In order to identify patient confidentiality breaches only, the UHB would need to undertake a manual trawl of all breaches recorded across two (2) systems, for the five (5) financial years requested, to

identify any information that may fulfil these parts of your request, as the information is not recorded in easily accessible manner.

The UHB can confirm that two thousand, three hundred and forty-six (2,346) data breaches were recorded, for all reasons, during the 2020/21 to 2024/25 financial years. It is estimated that a manual search of these records would exceed the 18 hours stipulated within the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA). Based on the number of records identified, conducting a search taking a minimum of five (5) minutes per digital record, would exceed the 'appropriate limit', costing the UHB the following:

2,346 @ 5 minutes per record = 194 hours and 43 minutes
194 hours and 43 minutes @ £25 per hour = £4,2867.93

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, this can include assisting a requestor to further refine their request.

Unfortunately, the UHB is unable to provide advice on how you can refine your request further. This is due to the UHB still requiring a manual trawl of all data breach records to be undertaken to identify the circumstances of the breach.

Where the figures in the tables for questions 4 and 6 have been replaced with an asterisk (*), the UHB is unable to provide you with the exact number of breaches due to the low number of cases (less than 5), as there is a potential risk of identifying individuals if this was disclosed. The UHB has also replaced the totals which could be used to calculate the redacted figure with a double asterisk (**) these details are being withheld under Section 40(2) of the FoIA. This information is protected by the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA)/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 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.

1. The UHB confirms that a total of two thousand, three hundred and forty-six (2,346) data breaches were recorded, for any reason, during the 2020/21 to 2024/25 financial years.
2. The UHB provides within the table below, the number of data breaches recorded, for any reason, by hospital/site and year, during the 2020/21 to 2024/25 financial years.

Financial year	Bronglais General Hospital	Glangwili General Hospital	Prince Philip Hospital	Withybush General Hospital	UHB wide/other sites
2020/21	22	33	17	24	65
2021/22	14	30	22	22	103
2022/23	52	131	66	59	320
2023/24	60	181	74	165	306

2024/25	39	187	73	115	166
Total	187	562	252	385	960

3. The UHB provides below, a list of the categories used to record the type of breach:

- Cyber related
- Disclosed in error
- Disclosed in error electronic
- Disclosed in error paper
- Disclosed in error verbal
- Lost in transit
- Lost or stolen hardware
- Lost or stolen paperwork
- Misfiling electronic
- Misfiling paper
- Non-secure disposal paperwork
- Other
- Technical failing
- Unauthorised access/disclosure
- Uploaded to web in error
- Corruption/Inability to recover

4. The UHB provides within the table below, the number of breaches for any reason, reported to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), during the 2020/21 to 2024/25 financial years.

Financial year	Number
2020/21	*
2021/22	5
2022/23	5
2023/24	15
2024/25	*
Total	31

5. The UHB does not hold the information exactly as requested, as it records this data in calendar years not financial years. Therefore, the UHB confirms that forty-eight (48) members of staff were formally investigated for an alleged breach of patient confidentiality, during the 2020 to 2025 calendar years.

6. The UHB provides within the table below, the number of staff who received each investigation outcome.

Outcome	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
No further action	0	*	0	*	0	0
Informal action or retraining	*	*	*	*	*	*
Formal disciplinary action	*	8	7	7	6	*
Total	5	11	**	10	**	**