

Reference:	FOI.8897.22
Subject:	Patients being removed from waiting lists
Date of Request:	11 May 2022

Requested:

Further to FOI 8665:

1. I want to know the total number of patients names removed from all waiting lists (for all departments as one total for the Health Board), for whatever reason in the 12 month period prior to the end of April 2021.
2. I want to know how many names were removed from the waiting lists because they had been Referred to Treatment?

For the period is from the start of the Covid pandemic (circa January 2020) to the end of September 2021:

3. How many died from Covid in your Board Area
4. And, of these how many died as a result of probable or definite hospital acquired Covid infection.

Response:

1. Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) provides within the table below, the number of unique pathways which were removed from any waiting lists, for any reason, during the period 1 May 2020 to 30 April 2021.

Number of pathways removed	234,405
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Please note:- a patient may be included in these numbers more than once if they had multiple referrals for different services in the system. The UHB has therefore provided the number of pathways, which can be defined as the number of referrals into the various work streams within Secondary Care. For example, if a patient had three (3) referrals into three (3) different service pathways pending but they no longer required the referrals, the one patient would then have three pathways removed from the system.

2. The UHB provides within the table below, the number of unique pathways which were removed from the waiting lists because they had been Referred to Treatment, during the period 1 May 2020 to 30 April 2021.

Number of pathways removed	169,092
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Please note:- a patient may be included in these numbers more than once if they had multiple referrals for different services in the system. The UHB has therefore provided the number of pathways, which can be defined as the number of referrals into the various work streams within Secondary Care.

3. The UHB provides within the table below, the number of patients that passed away within twenty- eight (28) days of a positive COVID-19 test, during the period 1 January 2020 to 30 September 2021.

Number of patients	530
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4. The UHB considers that this information is exempt under Section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA), which states that information is exempt if it is intended that the information held by the public authority will be published at a future date.

This exemption is qualified and therefore, if information falls within Section 22, public authorities must apply a public interest test.

The information can only be withheld if the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

The UHB has therefore considered the following:

In favour of disclosure: There is a public interest in the UHB being open and transparent. The COVID-19 pandemic and contraction of the virus, especially in the case of hospital transmissions is a popular topic of discussion, with a significant amount of public interest. Due to the interest in the topic, it is within everyone's interests that information is shared and that the public be kept informed of developments, to reduce anxieties within our communities.

Against Disclosure: The information being requested is currently under review and is therefore incomplete. Disclosure at this time could lead to anxiety in communities and due to the strong opinions of the handling of the pandemic, disclosure of the current information could attract negative opinion. It is the UHB's opinion that providing information before it has been fully validated could cause the public's anxieties to become exacerbated and cause further anger, which in turn, could harm the UHB's relationship with its communities.

Decision: - The UHB considers that the public interest in withholding the requested information at this time is greater than the interest in disclosing it, as the attention drawn from the disclosure could cause harm to the UHB and it is therefore applying a Section 22 exemption.

The UHB is currently in the process of reviewing the hospital acquired COVID-19 infections, in line with the NHS Wales National Framework for the Management of Patient Safety Incidents. On completion of the review, the report will be published on the UHB's website, with all updates in relation to the ongoing review being presented at the Quality Safety and Experience Committee meetings, with the details being published on the UHB's webpage, which can be accessed via the link below:

[Quality Safety and Experience Committee \(QSEC\) - Hywel Dda University Health Board \(nhs.wales\)](#)

[There have been two \(2\) updates](#) on the review of Nosocomial COVID-19 Infections and other COVID-19 related matters presented at the UHB's QSEC meetings on the 10 August 2021 and 8 February 2022.

For ease of reference, please click on the attached link, which will take you directly to the review papers:

10 August 2021: [Health & Care Standards Fundamentals of Care Annual Audit Report \(nhs.wales\)](#)

8 February 2022: [Health & Care Standards Fundamentals of Care Annual Audit Report \(nhs.wales\)](#)

Furthermore, whilst operating in accordance with the Section 45 Freedom of Information Code of Practice, the UHB has a duty to provide advice and assistance.

Information on COVID-19 infection onset is already within the public domain and therefore, the UHB has applied an exemption under Section 21 of the FoIA, as the information is accessible by another means. The information is available on the Coronavirus data dashboard on the Public Health Wales (PHW) website.

For ease of reference, please click on the attached link which will take you directly to the PHW COVID-19 webpage, where all information submitted to PHW can be viewed:

[New Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) data dashboard launched - Public Health Wales \(nhs.wales\)](#)