

Reference:	FOI.17696.25
Subject:	Policy documents
Date of Request:	3 July 2025

Requested:

1. What is the content of any policy document or clinical referral protocol or guidance (henceforth abbreviated as 'policy') in current use in the Health Board which describes whether patients living with overweight or obesity, who are under consideration or seeking referral for hip or knee replacement surgery, are subject to any of the following:
 - A BMI threshold for referral to surgery or listing for surgery
 - A requirement to accept referral or support for weight management ahead of surgical referral or listing for surgery
 - A requirement to demonstrate attempted or successful weight loss ahead of surgical referral or listing for surgery
 - Postponement or delay to their surgical referral or listing for surgery, whether or not the patient chooses to engage in weight management during that time.
2. What was the start date for the policy?
3. What is the planned review date for the policy?
4. If no such policy is currently in place, are there plans for policy introduction?
5. If so, when and of what content?

Response:

Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) can inform you that it does not hold the information requested. The UHB does not have a specific policy around treating patients living with obesity or treating patients who are overweight and are on a waiting list for surgery for operations such as hip or knee replacements.

Furthermore, I can inform you that the UHB has no plans to develop a policy specifically around managing patients living with obesity or patients who are overweight and are waiting for an operation.

However, whilst operating in accordance with the Section 45 Freedom of Information Code of Practice, the UHB has a duty to provide advice and assistance. Therefore, I can confirm that it is recognised that most clinicians already advise patients that a raised BMI is an optimisable risk factor and that they should attempt to lower their BMI below a level of 40 before proceeding to surgery.