

Reference:	FOI.16203.24
Subject:	Private healthcare
Date of Request:	16 December 2024

Requested:

1. How many patients were referred by Hywel Dda University Health Board for any form of consultation, examinations or treatment with a private healthcare provider between 2018 and 2024? Can I please have these figures broken down by year - either by calendar year or financial year depending on how they are recorded?
2. How many Hywel Dda University Health Board operations were outsourced to private healthcare providers in each year between 2018 and 2024?
3. What was the total estimated cost to Hywel Dda University Health Board of using private healthcare providers in each year from 2018 to 2024?

Response:

Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) is unable to provide you with all of the information requested, 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.

As the information requested is not collated and recorded centrally, the UHB would need to contact its services individually and request a manual search of their records for the 2018 to 2024 calendar years, to identify any information that may fulfil your request contained in questions 1 and 2.

Additionally, not all of the information for question 3 is recorded centrally. Therefore, a further manual trawl of invoices and financial ledgers would be required to provide all of the information requested.

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, the UHB has a duty to provide advice and assistance. Therefore, the UHB provides the accessible information it holds below.

1. The UHB provides within the table below, the number of patients referred to Werndale Hospital for any reason, as recorded on the UHB’s Welsh Patient Administration System (WPAS), during the 2019 to 2021 calendar years. No records were returned for the 2018, and 2022 to 2024 calendar years.

Calendar year	Number of inpatients	Number of outpatients
2019	16	6
2020	231	620
2021	31	17

2. The UHB provides within the table below, the number of patients referred to Werndale Hospital for an operation, as recorded on the UHB's WPAS, during the 2020 and 2021 calendar years. No records were returned for the 2018 to 2019 and 2022 to 2024 calendar years.

Calendar year	Number of patients
2020	999
2021	290

Additionally, the UHB provides within the table overleaf, the data recoded for all outsourced attendances at a private healthcare facility, during the Covid-19 pandemic, for the period 1 September 2021 to 31 March 2022.

Department	Number
Cardiology	60
Dermatology	3,731
Endoscopy - Gastroscopy, Colonoscopy & Sigmoidoscopy	281
General Surgery	72
Gynaecology	4
Ophthalmology	4,781
Trauma and Orthopaedics (T&O)	257
Urology	31

Please note:- the data provided in the tables above may include duplicate patients, as they may have attended for more than one (1) appointment. i.e. Consultation, pre-assessment clinic and/or procedure.

3. The UHB provides, within the table below, the spend on private healthcare providers, during the 2019/20 to 2023/24 financial years.

financial year	Spend
2019/20	£4,536,000.00
2020/21	£3,930,000.00
2021/22	£8,244,000.00
2022/23	£2,358,000.00
2023/24	£4,360,000.00