

Reference:	FOI.1348.19
Subject:	Provision of migraine treatment
Date of Request:	13 August 2019

Requested and response:

Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) is unable to provide you with the number of referrals made by GPs to the headache clinic or the number of patients currently managed by the service, as it is estimated that the cost of answering your request would exceed the “appropriate level” as stated in the Freedom of Information (Fees and Appropriate Limit) Regulations 2004. The “appropriate level” 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 manual search of all referrals received into the Neurology clinic, to identify the number of these were relating to migraines/headaches. Additionally, in order to provide you with the number of patients currently being managed by the service, the UHB would need to cross reference all Neurology patient records to identify their clinical needs.

The number of patients referred in 2018/2019 was 1,721 and in 2019/2020 was 1,069, therefore conducting the search would far exceed the ‘appropriate level’, costing the UHB the following:

2790 @ 15 minutes per patient record = 697.5 hours
697.5 hours @ £25 per hours = £17,437.50

The UHB is therefore applying an exemption under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI), 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.

Under section 16 of the FOI, the UHB has an obligation to provide advice and assistance. The UHB has therefore provided you with the answers to the remainder of your questions below.

Provision of headache/migraine clinics

1. Do you hold a regular headache/migraine clinic? If so please give details, including frequency of the clinic.

The UHB does not run regular headache/migraine clinics. Patients are seen in the general Neurology clinics held at Glangwili General Hospital (GGH) and Withybush General Hospital (WGH), of which there are six and a half weekly clinics between both sites.

Patients with chronic migraines are referred to the botulinum toxin (botox) clinics, which are run by the Pain Service. The botox clinic is run on a weekly basis in GGH. WGH does not run a botox clinic, patients are included in the pain procedures list in the neurology clinics.

2. How many referrals have been made by GPs to the headache clinic in 2018-19 and 2019-20 (to date)?

Exempt under section 12 of the FOI as detailed at the beginning of this letter.

3. What is the current waiting time for new patients to access the clinic?

The UHB's waiting time for routine referrals to see a Neurologist was approximately six (6) months at the time of your request.

4. How many patients with chronic migraine are being managed by the clinic?

Exempt under section 12 of the FOI as detailed at the beginning of this letter.

5. How is the clinic staffed?

The UHB confirms the clinics are consultant delivered with one (1) doctor and two (2) nurses managing the clinic in GGH, and one (1) doctor and one (1) nurse managing the clinic in WGH.

Staffing

6. How many migraine specialists are employed by the health board?

The UHB employs three (3) Neurologists with a whole time equivalent (WTE) of 2.5; all are experts in the management of migraines.

7. How many Neurologists are employed by the health board who see patients with migraine?

All three (3) of the UHB's Neurologists see patients suffering with migraines.

8. How many migraine nurse specialists are employed in the health board?

The UHB does not employ any migraine nurse specialists. The nurse specialists who work in headache management are Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS) in chronic pain.

9. How many GPs have a special interest in chronic migraine in the health board?

The UHB is unable to provide the information requested as it is not held. We would therefore recommend you redirect this question to the GP practices. Direct contact details for the UHBs GP practices can be found via the following link:

<http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/862/directory/gps>

10. How many consultant neurology vacancies does the health board currently have?

The UHB had no Consultant Neurology vacancies at the time of your request.

Treatments

11. What treatments are routinely available to patients with chronic migraines?

The UHB uses all standard preventative treatments available and authorised by NICE available for patients with chronic migraines. Botulinum Toxin is also available for use.

12. How many consultant neurologists are trained in NHS Botox for migraine in the health board?

The UHB has one (1) Neurologist trained in NHS Botox for migraine.