

Reference:	FOI.784.19
Subject:	Referrals to sleep clinics
Date of Request:	20 May 2019

Requested

- 1) The number of people who have been referred to specialist sleep clinics within NHS Wales facilities between April 2009 and April 2019?
- 2) How many of those who have been referred to specialist sleep clinics within NHS Wales facilities (between April 2009 and April 2019) are prescribed selective serotonin re-uptake inhibitors for mental health conditions?
- 3) What percentage of those who have been referred to NHS Wales sleep clinics in this time frame are prescribed selective serotonin re-uptake inhibitors?
- 4) How many people were prescribed selective serotonin re-uptake inhibitors in Wales in 2018 in comparison to 2008?
- 5) How many people were referred for sleep study assessments in Wales in 2018 in comparison to 2008?

Response:

Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) is unable to provide you with the number of patients that were referred to specialist sleep clinics whilst they were prescribed selective serotonin re-uptake inhibitors (SSRIs) or the number of patients who were prescribed SSRIs, 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 (2½ working days) in determining whether the UHB holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

In order to provide you with the number of patients who were referred to specialised sleep clinics whilst also being prescribed SSRIs, the UHB would be required to identify the patients who were referred and subsequently conduct a manual search of the patient’s medical records to confirm if they were prescribed SSRI’s. Additionally, in order to provide the number of patients who were prescribed SSRI’s the UHB would be required to identify the number of dispensed prescriptions and cross reference these against patient records to calculate the number of patients. It is estimated that fulfilling question 2 alone would far exceed the ‘appropriate level’, costing the UHB the following:

247 @ 15 minutes per patient record = 61.75 hours
61.75 hours @ £25 per hours = £1,543.75

The UHB is therefore applying an exemption under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, 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 Freedom of Information Act 2000, the UHB has an obligation to provide advice and assistance. The UHB has therefore provided a partial response to your request using information that is held centrally.

1. The table below provides the number of patients that were referred to specialist sleep clinics between 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2019.

Financial Year	Total
2009/10	10
2010/11	2
2011/12	5
2012/13	8
2013/14	17
2014/15	8
2015/16	18
2016/17	97
2017/18	13
2018/19	54
2019/20	15
Total	247

4. The UHB is unable to confirm the number of patients who were prescribed SSRIs between 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2019; however, the UHB has provided the number of prescriptions for SSRIs that were dispensed within the requested date range. This is provided in Attachment 1.
5. The table below provides the number of patients who were referred for sleep study assessments in the 2008 calendar year and the 2018 calendar year.

Year	Total
2008	42
2018	13
Total	55