

Reference:	FOI.17858.25
Subject:	Use of drug alarm systems
Date of Request:	20 July 2025

Requested:

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I would like to request the following information regarding the use of the drug alert/harm reduction text or warning system operated by your service (e.g. for dangerous or contaminated heroin alerts):

1. The number of times the alert system was activated between 2016 and the present (broken down by year).
2. The dates and nature of each activation (e.g. substance type, region affected, method of alert – e.g. text, email, social media).
3. Whether the alert system is still active, and if not, when and why it ceased operation.
4. Who is now responsible for drug alerts in the Pembrokeshire area (if it has changed from your service).

Response:

1. Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) is unable to provide you with the information exactly as requested, as the alert system was not initiated until mid December 2022. Therefore, the UHB provides, within the table below, the number of times the alert system was activated, during the period from mid December 2022 to 1 July 2025.

Year	Number
Mid – 31 December 2022	1
2023	4
2024	5
1 January – 1 July 2025	5

2. The UHB confirms that the alert system has a tiered approach that is dependent upon the nature of the intelligence received.

If the intelligence is high, then a very specific social media post is created by Dyfed Drug and Alcohol Service (DDAS) and is then shared by Dyfed Powys Police and the UHB. On some occasions, service users have also been sent text messages to inform them of this.

If the intelligence is medium risk, then a more generic social media post is shared and service users known to use a particular substance are sent messages.

If the intelligence and risk is low, then evidence-based harm reduction messages are shared. The output is not always labelled as an alert in order to minimise concern.

Details of each alert can be found in the table overleaf:

Date	Nature
December 2022	Potent heroin known to have been circulating across Wales. This resulted in a number of hospitalisations across the UHB. The alert was of high intelligence and followed the protocol detailed above. There were no further hospitalisations after the alert. This affected the whole of the three counties across the UHB.
February 2023	Specific information shared with cannabis users in Ceredigion due to a potential spice spiked product being sold.
March 2023	High intelligence report of capsules being sold as Pregablin. This information was shared from Public Health Wales (PHW) and Wedinos. This affected the whole of the three counties across the UHB.
April 2023	'Candy Flipping' alert issued across the whole of the three counties across the UHB.
August 2023	Full alert was issued regarding a rogue batch of Medical Diazepam (MSJs) in Carmarthenshire.
May 2024	A general social media post was issued regarding advice around harm reduction and being safe after a number of unconnected non-fatal overdoses occurred across the three (3) counties within the UHB's geographical area.
	The May 2024 alert was reshared on social media as it was successful.
November 2024	A low level safety alert message was shared around pink cocaine. This was a low level alert as it was out of the UHB's catchment area, but was shared across the three (3) counties within the UHB's geographical area for information.
December 2024	High level intelligence was received regarding strong heroin in circulation. A harm reduction social media message was created and shared. Service users were also contacted via text message.
	A general alert regarding poly drug use was issued as part of the Christmas party scene information. This was issued following low level intelligence, but a timely opportunity to warn people to be careful when taking unknown substances.
January 2025	Low level intelligence was received around benzodiazepines. A social media post was issued warning individuals of the risks. There was also service user engagement for those individuals known to be benzodiazepine users.
April 2025	Medium level intelligence received regarding suspected pills circulating within Pembrokeshire. A harm reduction message was issued and there was also service user engagement for those individuals known to be users. There were no hospitalisations reported.
May 2025	A social media post was issued regarding Nitazines found in pills in England. The service took a harm reduction approach and targeted the night time economy cohorts.
June 2025	Harm reduction messages were sent to a specific cohort within Carmarthenshire due to low level intelligence around strong cocaine.
July 2025	High level intelligence was received after a Nitazine discovery. A harm reduction social media post was issued after this discovery which mainly focused on Carmarthenshire. However, this was shared across the three (3) counties within the UHB's geographical area.

3. The UHB confirms that the alert system is still active.

4. The UHB confirms that Craig Jones, Prevention and Population Health Improvement Strategy Manager, is responsible for drug alerts within the Pembrokeshire area.