



Bwrdd Iechyd  
Addysgu Powys  
Powys Teaching  
Health Board

Information Governance Team  
Monnow Ward  
Bronllys Hospital  
Bronllys  
Brecon  
Powys LD3 0LY  
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Our ref: IG/FOI/23.R.138

02 June 2023

Sent via email to: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

## Request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

I write further to your request for information which was received on 26 April 2023, to confirm, in accordance with S.1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, that Powys Teaching Health Board (PTHB) does hold the information that you require.

For ease of reference your request is set out below and our response follows:

### Your Freedom of Information (FOI) Request:

I am writing to you to find out more about what action is being taken to improve outcomes for liver disease and liver cancer patients in Powys Teaching Health Board.

I am concerned by recent analysis of the Welsh National Liver Registry, by the British Liver Trust, which highlights that liver disease mortality rates have increased by 23% between 2019 and 2021.

Liver disease is on the rise - the number of patients in Wales on the Liver Registry has more than tripled between 2002 and 2021. As the Quality Statement on Liver Disease outlines, deaths in Wales from chronic liver disease have more than doubled in the past 20 years. It is essential that early detection and appropriate workforce planning for hepatology, liver nurse specialists and alcohol care teams is in place, to effectively manage needs now and in the future.

Wales has broken ground with the National All-Wales Abnormal Liver Blood Test Pathway, launched in October 2021, and the publication of the Quality Statement on Liver Disease in November 2022.

Pencadlys  
Tŷ Glasbury, Ysbyty Bronllys,  
Aberhonddu, Powys LD3 0LU  
Ffôn: 01874 711661



Headquarters  
Glasbury House, Bronllys Hospital  
Brecon, Powys LD3 0LU  
Tel: 01874 711661

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth Gymraeg  
Bwrdd Iechyd Addysgu Powys yw enw gweithred Bwrdd Iechyd Lleol  
Addysgu Powys



We welcome correspondence in Welsh  
Powys Teaching Health Board is the operational name of  
Powys Teaching Local Health Board

I appreciate there are a range of pressures on Health Boards, including legacy impacts from Covid. However, I am keen to understand how the Health Board is addressing liver disease, your planning around the implementation of the Quality Statement and progress on the All Wales Abnormal Liver Blood Test Pathway.

Please could you update me on what action is being taken in the following areas:

1. What steps are being taken to effectively implement the All Wales Abnormal Liver Blood Test Pathway?
2. Are non-invasive liver fibrosis tests (e.g. FibroScan) currently in use in primary and community care to improve earlier detection of liver disease?
3. What steps are being taken to deliver outcomes under the Quality Statement on Liver Disease?
4. What preventative action is being taken to reduce pre-disposing risk factors for liver disease such as alcohol misuse and obesity?
5. What are the current staffing levels for hepatologists, liver nurse specialists and alcohol care teams? Is this sufficient to meet local need or will further recruitment or training be undertaken?

Powys Response:

1. PTHB can confirm that steps taken to effectively implement the All Wales Abnormal Liver Blood Test Pathway form part of the primary care clinical information systems.
2. PTHB can confirm that non-invasive liver fibrosis tests would be undertaken by our secondary care commissioned providers. FibroScan is only available in secondary care. Patients are identified by blood tests and lifestyle questions by general practitioners and associated clinicians, and are referred into secondary care as per the All Wales Abnormal Liver Blood Test Pathway. There are multiple pathways of referral for Powys patients, according to where they live and where services are available outside of the county.
3. With regards to delivering outcomes under the Quality Statement on Liver Disease, there is an expectation that providers would comply with National Quality Standards.
4. The Health Board is working towards implementation of the Welsh Government Obesity Strategy Healthy Weight: Healthy Wales. Local delivery including establishment of weight management service pathways for adults which consist of clinical treatment service that support individuals who are overweight or obese to achieve and maintain a healthy weight. In addition, work is being implemented at population level with the aim to prevent and reduce the prevalence of obesity and improve population healthy through a whole system approach to Healthy weight.
5. PTHB does not directly employ these teams. Some of these services are provided by commissioned secondary care services.

Should you need any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me at the address below.

If you are dissatisfied, with the way your request has been dealt with by PTHB, you have the right to request a review in which case you should write to:

Chief Executive  
Powys Teaching Health Board Headquarters  
Glasbury House  
Bronllys Hospital  
Bronllys  
Brecon  
Powys LD3 0LY

If you are still dissatisfied at the end of the review, you may complain to the Information Commissioner, who can be contacted at the following address:

Information Commissioner's Office - Wales  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor,  
Churchill House,  
Churchill Way,  
Cardiff, CF10 2HH  
Tel: 029 2067 8400 Fax 029 2067 8399  
[www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk) [twitter.com/iconews](https://twitter.com/iconews)

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yng Nghymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb y fath ohebiaeth yng Nghymraeg ac ni fydd hyn yn arwain at oedi. We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. We will reply to such correspondence in Welsh and this will not lead to a delay.

Yours sincerely



**Kate Wright**  
**Medical Director**