



Bwrdd Iechyd
Addysgu Powys
Powys Teaching
Health Board

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Our ref: IG/FOI/24.R.209

1 July 2024

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 13 May 2024, to confirm, in accordance with S.1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, that Powys Teaching Health Board (PTHB) partly holds the information that you require.

For ease of reference your request is set out below and my response follows each question individually in bold.

Your Freedom of Information (FOI) Request and Powys Response (Bold):

I am writing with a Freedom of Information request regarding the provision and delivery of audiology services within your Health Board. To better understand how your trust deals with audiology services, please clarify whether your Health Board provides these services:

- In-house (i.e. delivered in your Health Board or provided by another NHS organisation)
- Outsources (i.e. delivered by an independent provider in their care setting)
- Insources (i.e. delivered by an independent provider in your care setting)

Additionally, please provide the following data for your Health Board and for each financial year 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23, and 2023/24:

All Powys Teaching Health Board (PTHB) Audiology Services are provided in-house, other than a commissioned hearing aid maintenance service from the Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID). This service recruits and manages volunteers to provide a

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



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

hearing aid maintenance service and patient support and signposting service.

Hearing assessments

1. How many patients had a hearing assessment within the following settings and what was the total spending in £ on treating these patients (where possible please could you give the data per independent provider contracted):

- a. In-house
- b. Outsourced
- c. Insourced

No providers were outsourced or insourced to provide hearing assessments. A hearing assessment is a procedure carried out for adult and paediatric patients within various appointment types. The patient's booking is made based on the appointment type and name, not on the specific procedures which are carried out within the appointment. Due to this, and varying appointment types and names being used in different sites, with varying protocols about which procedures are included in an appointment, it is not possible to record or report how many patients had a hearing assessment within PTHB within a given time.

I am unable to provide the total spend on treating patients as the cost of equipment, consumables, estates, staff pay and training cannot be separated by procedure.

We are unable to break down this down into the detail requested we are able to share that for the period there were 105,327 appointments.

Hearing aid fittings

1. How many patients had a hearing aid fitting assessment within the following settings and what was the total spending in £ on treating these patients (where possible please could you give the data per independent provider contracted):

- a. In-house
- b. Outsourced
- c. Insourced

Please see response above.

Hearing aid aftercare

1. How many patients had hearing aid aftercare performed within the following settings and what was the total spending in £ on treating these patients (where possible please could you give the data per independent provider contracted):

- a. In-house
- b. Outsourced
- c. Insourced

a. In-house:

I am unable to report how many patients within PTHB received hearing aid 'aftercare'. Patients who are fitted with a hearing aid are a patient for the rest of their life. Aftercare of their first hearing aid includes postal of replacement batteries every 12 weeks, postal service maintenance of their hearing aid every 6 months, self-referral appointments where replacement, fine tune or repair is required, a reassessment of their hearing and hearing exchange every 3-5 years. Aftercare also includes any rehabilitation to adapting to their hearing loss and hearing aid provision, and phone calls to the service for support.

The details of patients accessing various parts of the hearing aid service in Powys are as follows:

	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23	2023/ 24
Number of unique patients who accessed the hearing aid service in Powys.	6127	5971	4656	5994	6500	7303
Number of appointments booked for the hearing aid service in Powys.	15557	14313	12396	17006	17775	17276

b. Outsourced:

PTHB commissions a hearing aid maintenance service from the RNID, which organises volunteer-led clinics across the county. The RNID provided the following appointments: -

- 2018/19 - 2132
- 2019/20 - 2130
- 2020/21 - 879
- 2021/22 - 756
- 2022/23 - 836
- 2023/24 - 1078

The cost of commissioning the RNID service is not costed per patient or per service but is an agreed annual cost, which is not confined to hearing aid maintenance alone. This includes training and expenses of volunteers, recruitment of volunteers and a telephone/internet support service for patients. Therefore, I am unable to provide the spend in respect of hearing aid fittings.

c. Insourced:

PTHB did not insource any hearing aid aftercare services.

Hearing aid devices

1. How many hearing aid devices were delivered to patients within the following settings and what did the total spend £ on hearing aid devices for these patients in (where possible please could you give the data per independent provider contracted):

- a. In-house
- b. Outsourced
- c. Insourced

It is not possible to record the number of hearing aid devices delivered to patients across the adult and paediatric services across all sites and services within PTHB. Activity is recorded using appointment type and this will vary across sites.

We are unable to break down this down into the detail requested we are able to share that for the period there were 105,327 appointments.

Other

1. Could you please provide a copy of the service specification given to all bidders for when the contract for hearing aid services was last advertised?

If any of the specific splits are not available, please provide total figures for the system and specify which main splits are recorded by your Health Board (in-house/ independent sector). For your convenience, I have attached an Excel file for you to use and provide the requested information.

This information is not available due to changes since this contract was commissioned. PTHB is going through a review of all third sector providers, which will result in several of them being re-tendered. However please find attached a copy of the current service specification for information – FOI 24.R.209 Attachment 1.

Under the terms of the Health Board's Freedom of Information procedure, individuals seeking access to recorded information held by the Health Board are entitled to request an internal review of the handling of their requests. If you would like to complain about the Health Board's handling of your request, please contact us directly at the address below or register your complaint via powysfoi.foi@wales.nhs.uk

If after Internal Review you remain dissatisfied you are also entitled to refer the matter to the information commissioner at the Information Commissioner's Office (Wales), 2nd Floor, Churchill House, Churchill Way, Cardiff, CF10 2HH. Telephone Number: 0330 414 6421.

Yours sincerely



Joy Garfitt

Executive Director of Operations/ Director of Community & Mental Health

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.