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Our ref: IG/FOI/FOI.290.26

29 July 2026

Sent via email to: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

I write further to your request for information received on 22 July 2026, 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 requested. For ease of reference your request is set out below and the Health Board's response follows each question individually.

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

I am making a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. I would be grateful for the following information about staff working in your operating theatre department, and in particular recovery and post anaesthetic care unit (PACU) staff.

Q1. Please provide the current procedure or policy governing what staff in the perioperative or theatre department wear. This includes any theatre uniform procedure, theatre etiquette standard operating procedure, or local departmental dress code that applies within the operating theatre suite, in addition to the corporate uniform and dress code policy. - **Within Powys Teaching Health Board's (PTHB) theatre services, staff attire is governed by local theatre infection prevention and control guidance, alongside relevant Health Board infection prevention and control and uniform policies. Please find enclosed FOI.290.26 Attachment 1: TEP 035 Infection Control Operational Guidelines for Theatres (Version 5). This is the primary local document and includes requirements relating to preparation of personnel, personal hygiene, theatre clothing, staff health and visitor requirements within the theatre environment. Staff are also required to comply with relevant Health Board policies relating to infection prevention and control and professional dress standards.**

Q2. Please provide the relevant provisions of your infection prevention and control policy, or equivalent, that apply to work attire in the operating theatre department and in the recovery or PACU area. In particular, please include what

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it says about designated theatre attire in those areas, the changing of visibly soiled or contaminated attire during a shift, the laundering of that attire, and any bare below the elbow's requirement. - **The requirements relating to theatre attire are set out in the above-mentioned policy and in FOI.290.26 Attachment 2: IPC 048 Standard Infection Prevention and Control Precautions (SICPs) Policy.** These documents include requirements relating to:

- **Theatre clothing and preparation of personnel working within the theatre environment.**
- **Personal hygiene requirements.**
- **Hand hygiene and infection prevention precautions.**
- **The use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) where clinically indicated.**
- **Management of contaminated clothing and linen.**
- **Requirements relating to footwear and head coverings within theatre environments.**

The policies require staff to maintain clean attire and comply with infection prevention and control precautions appropriate to their role and clinical environment. Where clothing becomes visibly contaminated with blood, body fluids or other potentially infectious material, staff are expected to follow Health Board infection prevention and control procedures. This includes changing attire where required and ensuring that appropriate laundering arrangements are followed. Theatre attire is laundered through approved Health Board laundry arrangements.

The Health Board also applies a bare below the elbows approach in clinical settings, in line with infection prevention and control requirements, to support effective hand hygiene. Relevant requirements are detailed within the Health Board's infection prevention and control policies.

Q3. Within the theatre department, please state what attire recovery and PACU practitioners are required to wear on shift. Specifically, are they required to wear theatre scrubs, ward nursing uniform, or other designated attire? Please answer for recovery and PACU staff in particular, rather than for theatre staff in general.

- PTHB operates a day surgery service. Patients who undergo a general anaesthetic are transferred from the operating theatre to the recovery area for immediate post-anaesthetic care, before returning to the Day Surgery Unit for ongoing observations, discharge assessment and preparation for returning home. Staff working within the operating theatre environment wear designated theatre scrubs in accordance with TEP 035. Practitioners providing ongoing care within the Day Surgery Unit, including final observations and discharge care, wear the All-Wales NHS Nursing Uniform.

Q4. Do recovery and PACU practitioners enter the anaesthetic room and/or the operating theatre to assist in patient care during a shift, for example to take handover, assist with the airway, or respond to a deteriorating patient? If so, please indicate how routinely this occurs. - **Yes. Recovery practitioners may**

enter the anaesthetic room and operating theatre as part of the patient pathway and in the provision of patient care. This may include receiving patient handover, assisting with patient transfer, supporting clinical teams in emergency situations, or responding to a deteriorating patient where required. Within PTHB's day surgery service, patients who undergo a general anaesthetic are transferred from the operating theatre to the recovery area for immediate post-anaesthetic care before returning to the Day Surgery Unit for ongoing observations and discharge preparation. As part of this pathway, recovery practitioners work closely with theatre staff and may enter theatre or anaesthetic areas where clinically required.

Q5. Are recovery and PACU practitioners issued with theatre scrubs by the Health Board? If so, approximately how many sets per practitioner, and are these laundered by the Health Board or by staff at home? - **Staff working within the operating theatre environment wear designated theatre scrubs in accordance with local theatre infection prevention and control requirements and TEP 035. Scrubs worn within the operating theatre environment are laundered through the Health Board's approved laundry arrangements. Staff working within the Day Surgery Unit wear the All-Wales NHS Nursing Uniform. In accordance with Health Board uniform and infection prevention and control requirements, these uniforms are laundered by staff at home. Approximately three sets per practitioner are laundered by the Health Board each week.**

Q6. Please provide any risk assessment, equality impact assessment, or governance record (for example the minutes of the forum that approved it) relating to the attire that recovery and PACU staff are required to wear. - **The attire requirements applicable to staff working within the theatre environment are set out in TEP 035 and the Health Board's infection prevention and control policies, including IPC 048. TEP 035 was approved through the Theatre Operational Group and provides the governance framework for infection prevention and control practices within the theatre environment, including theatre clothing requirements.**

The service has not identified any separate recovery or PACU-specific risk assessment, equality impact assessment or governance record relating solely to the requirement for Day Surgery Unit or recovery practitioners to wear the All-Wales NHS Nursing Uniform. Uniform requirements are governed through Health Board uniform standards, infection prevention and control policies, and local theatre infection control guidance.

Q7. If the attire required of recovery or PACU staff has changed within the last three years, please provide the date of the change, the reason recorded for it, and the document or decision that authorised it. - **There has been no change to the attire requirements for recovery or Day Surgery Unit staff within the last three years.**

If you are dissatisfied with the handling or response to your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Should you wish an internal review, please quote the reference number and send your correspondence to the above address.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Address: Information Commissioner's Office (Wales), 2nd Floor, Churchill House, Churchill Way, Cardiff, CF10 2HH.

Telephone: 0330 414 6421

Complaints Portal: www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints

Web site: <https://ico.org.uk/>

Re-use of Public Sector Information

All information supplied by the Health Board in answering a request for information (RFI) under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 will be subject to the terms of the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015.

Under the terms of the Regulations, the Health Board will licence the re-use of any or all information supplied if being used in a form and for the purpose other than which it was originally supplied. This license for re-use will be in line with the requirements of the Regulations and the licensing terms and fees as laid down by the Office of Public Sector Information (OPSI). Most licenses will be free; however, the Health Board reserves the right, in certain circumstances to charge a fee for the re-use of some information which it deems to be of commercial value.

Further information including a sample license terms and fees can be found at Open Government Licence.

Yours sincerely



David Farnsworth
Assistant Director, Community Services Group

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.