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Powys Teaching
Health Board

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Our ref: IG/FOI/FOI.221.26

13 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 which was received on 02 June 2026, 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 the Health Board's response follows each question individually.

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

I am submitting this request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 regarding the withdrawal of NHS dental practices in Powys specifically Newtown and Welshpool and the operation of Community Dental Services (CDS) under the new NHS Wales dental contract.

This request is being made in the context of what is now widely understood to be a serious and escalating loss of NHS dental provision in Montgomeryshire, leaving many residents without access to routine or preventative dental care. Given the exceptional public interest, the potential impact on patient safety, widening health inequalities, and the use of public funds, I request full and detailed disclosure of the following information.

Q1. Contract Changes and Practice Withdrawal

a. How many NHS dental contracts have been terminated, handed back, or expired in Powys in each of the last three financial years (2023–2026)?

Please see the list below:

2023-24 – 1 General Dental Services (GDS) contract was handed back

2024-25 – 1 GDS contract was handed back

2025-26 – 7 GDS contracts were handed back and 1 was terminated

During the period of the last three years no GDS contracts expired.

b. How many dental practices have ceased providing NHS services (either fully or partially) over the same period?

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Tel: 01874 711661

On the basis of the above:

2023-24 – 1 practice ceased NHS provision

2024-25 – 1 practice ceased NHS provision

2025-26 – 8 practices ceased NHS provision

One of the practices that ceased NHS provision completely in 2025-26 had already partially ceased NHS provision in 2024-25.

Q1A. Full Accounting of NHS Dental Contract Loss

In light of evidence that not all losses of NHS provision are formally recorded as “contracts handed back”, I request a comprehensive and complete accounting of all NHS dental contract losses in Powys. Please provide:

a. The total number of NHS dental contracts that have ceased to deliver NHS services in Powys since the introduction of the new NHS Wales dental contract, including (but not limited to):

- contracts formally handed back
- contracts that have expired and not been renewed
- contracts where NHS activity has reduced to zero or near zero
- contracts terminated by the Health Board
- contracts affected by practice closure, suspension, or loss of clinicians

5 contracts were formally handed back on 31 March 2026 before the new NHS GDS contract regulations came into place. No contracts have expired during this period. All of these 5 contracts were terminated by the providers and not by the health board 3 stated they did not wish to continue providing GDS services under the new GDS contract regulations. The other 2 providers indicated that they no longer had clinicians available to deliver their NHS services.

a. For each case, please provide:

- the practice name and location
- the type of contract change (e.g. handed back, expired, terminated, ceased NHS delivery)
- the date of change
- whether NHS services fully or partially ceased

Please see the list below:

- **Cloverly Dental Practice, Builth Wells**
Fully ceased NHS activity on 31 March 2026 – contract hand back
- **CrickDental, Crickhowell**
Fully ceased NHS activity on 31 March 2026 – contract hand back
- **My Dentist Welshpool**
Fully ceased NHS activity on 31 March 2026 – contract hand back
- **Clifton Dental, Newtown**
Fully ceased NHS activity on 31 March 2026 – contract hand back
- **My Dentist Newtown**
Fully ceased NHS activity on 31 March 2026 – contract hand back and the practice will be closing completely

b. Please also confirm the total number of NHS dental contracts still actively delivering NHS care in Powys as of the date of this request - **There are currently 7 GDS Independent contractors actively delivering NHS care**

in Powys at the date of this request. There are also 2 Health Board managed practice delivering GDS care and 1 mobile dental unit.

Q2. Reasons for Contract Termination

For each contract that has ceased or been reduced, please provide the recorded reasons, including (but not limited to):

- financial non-viability
- workforce shortages
- NHS contract reform requirements
- regulatory or enforcement action

Please see the list below:

- **Cloverly Dental Practice- NHS contract reform requirements**
- **CrickDental, Crickhowell – NHS contract reform requirements**
- **My Dentist Welshpool – workforce shortages, and previous workforce not willing to work under NHS contract reform requirements**
- **Clifton Dental, Newtown – NHS contract reform requirements**
- **My Dentist Newtown – workforce shortages**

Q3. Workforce Impact

For each affected practice:

- how many staff were employed at the point of contract change?
- how many staff (if known) were:
 - made redundant
 - redeployed within NHS services
 - retained in private practice

The Health Board does not hold this information. Employment of staff is a matter for individual GDS practices.

Q4. Total Estimated Job Impact

What is the Health Board's estimate of the total number of staff affected by NHS dental contract losses across Powys?

The Health Board does not hold this information. Employment of staff is a matter for individual GDS practices.

Q5. Staffing Levels – Newtown Community Dental Service

a. Current number of dentists at Newtown CDS

b. Breakdown:

- permanent salaried
- locum
- other categories

There are 3 permanent salaried dentists with 0 locums or other categories.

c. For each of the last 12 months:

- number of dentists working
- total dentist-days delivered (by category)

There have been 3 dentists working in Newtown Community Dental Service (CDS) each month over the last 12 months.

6. Contract and Payment Arrangements (CDS)

a. Are dentists paid:

- day-rate?
- performance-based contract?

Dentists in the CDS are employed under salaried terms and conditions, in accordance with the nationally agreed contract arrangements for Wales contract. More information about NHS Dental Pay and Conditions in Wales is available from the NHS Alliance website: [Medical and Dental \(W\) - Pay, Terms and Conditions of Service](#)

b. If both: criteria for use

As above.

c. If day rates are used:

- current day rate (or range)
- changes in last 12 months (dates and values)
- Who approves CDS contract terms?

As above.

d. Provide any written policy or guidance on:

- use of day rates
- use of performance models

As above.

e. Critically:

- Why are CDS dentists permitted to be paid on day rates when general NHS practices are required to operate under performance-based NHS contracts?

As above.

7. Impact on General NHS Dental Practices

a. Has the Health Board prohibited NHS practices from using day-rate models?

No.

b. If so, provide copies of guidance

Not applicable.

c. How is contractual fairness and consistency maintained?

NHS dental contractors operate as independent businesses. The Health Board's role is to ensure compliance with the terms of the General Dental Services (GDS) contract, including delivery of agreed activity levels and adherence to regulatory requirements. Employment and remuneration arrangements within practices, including the use of day rate models, are matters for the contractor and are not prescribed or controlled by the Health Board.

8. Loss of NHS Provision – Newtown and Welshpool

a. Number of NHS patients losing access to a dentist

The Health Board does not hold this information

b. Number of affected children

The Health Board does not hold this information.

c. Current NHS dental waiting times and projected increases

Based on current data for the North Powys (SY postcode) area, there are 2,324 patients registered on the Dental Access Portal. The current average waiting time for access to NHS dental services is approximately 305 days. Children are given priority when allocating available dental places.

d. Impact assessments on:

- elderly patients
- disabled patients
- vulnerable groups

The Health Board does not hold this information. Following the decision by GDS contractors in north Powys to hand back their contract an Invitation to Tender has been issued for the provision of General Dental Services in Newtown ([Invitation to Tender: Provision of General Dental Services in Newtown - Powys Teaching Health Board](#)) with a further Invitation to Tender due shortly for Welshpool.

9. Travel and Accessibility

a. Nearest alternative NHS provider for affected patients

There are alternative NHS General Dental Services (GDS) providers within the North Powys area, including practices located in Llansantffraid, Llanfair Caereinion and Llanidloes.

b. Assessment of travel distances and transport barriers

When patients apply to the Dental Access Portal (DAP) this allows patients to indicate the distance they are willing to travel to access NHS dental care and whether they rely on public transport. This information is used to match patients to available appointments.

c. Equality Impact Assessment (if conducted)

The Health Board has not conducted a specific Equality Impact Assessment in relation to these changes. Instead our focus as above has been on seeking new providers for GDS services in Newtown and Welshpool. The Health Board remains mindful of its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and continues to consider accessibility in service delivery. Patients who may face additional barriers to accessing care, including those who are elderly, disabled, or otherwise vulnerable, may be eligible for treatment through the Community Dental Service (CDS), which operates on a referral-only basis.

10. Contract Failures and Accountability

a. What concerns have dentists raised about the new NHS Wales contract?

We have not received any concerns.

b. Has an internal review been undertaken into contract failure and dentist retention? - **No.**

c. What actions were taken when practices first indicated withdrawal—and why did these fail? - **Where a practice indicates an intention to withdraw from**

an NHS GDS contract, the Health Board's approach is to review the contract value and location and consider available options to maintain service provision. In recent years, PTHB has strengthened its overall dental provision by increasing the capacity of both General Dental Services (GDS) and Community Dental Services (CDS). This has included reinvestment of funding from ceased contracts into the development of salaried dental services to support continued access, particularly for urgent care and priority groups.

d. Have concerns been formally escalated to Welsh Government regarding the unsuitability of the contract model for rural areas such as Powys? - **No. Feedback from contractors since implementation of the new contract on 1 April 2026 has been broadly positive.**

11. Financial Transparency

a. Total NHS dental funding allocated to Powys over the last 5 years

The GDS allocations were:

Financial Year	Funding allocated
2025/26	£8.423m
2024/25	£8.030m
2023/24	£7.575m
2022/23	£7.710m
2021/22	£6.908m

b. Amount left unspent due to unfilled contracts

Financial Year	Amount left unspent due to unfilled contracts
2025/26	£779k
2024/25	£395k
2023/24	£0
2022/23	£346k
2021/22	£0

c. What happens to unspent funding?

Where possible unspent funding due to unfilled contracts is invested in additional activity with existing providers and the salaried service. NHS organisations are forbidden from carrying unspent funds across financial years.

d. Funding allocated to replace lost provision in Newtown and Welshpool

Information about funding is included in the tender values as these are published. Information about the tender value in Newtown is available via our website ([Invitation to Tender: Provision of General Dental Services in Newtown - Powys Teaching Health Board](#)) and will be available shortly when the tender for services in Welshpool is published.

12. Recruitment and Workforce Planning

a. Number of dentists recruited (24 months) - **The health board does not hold this information in relation to contracted General Dental Services. Employment of staff is a matter for individual GDS practices.**

b. Number declining roles and reasons given - **The health board does not hold this information in relation to contracted General Dental Services. Employment of staff is a matter for individual GDS practices.**

c. Incentives being offered - **The health board does not hold this information in relation to contracted General Dental Services. Employment of staff is a matter for individual GDS practices.**

d. Consideration of salaried NHS dentist roles - **Yes**

13. Community Dental Service Capacity

a. Current CDS capacity - **There is no specified capacity.**

b. Maximum additional patients CDS can safely absorb - **There is no specified capacity.**

c. Has CDS been redirected to treat routine patients due to collapse in general NHS dentistry? - **No.**

d. If CDS uses day-rate dentists, why is this model not available to general NHS practices? - **Not applicable.**

14. Emergency and Out-of-Hours Care

a. Number of patients relying on emergency dental care each weekend - **8-12 per weekend.**

b. Future provision arrangements following practice withdrawal - **The provision of emergency and out-of-hours dental care has not been affected by the recent contract withdrawals. Arrangements remain in place to ensure continued access to urgent care service.**

c. Will private providers continue NHS emergency services? - **The Health Board has a regulatory responsibility to provide out of hours dental services and the new regulations have urgent dental slots as part of the new regulations. Dental emergencies such as those that are life threatening are dealt with at the nearest maxillofacial unit.**

d. If not, what replacement system is in place? - **Not applicable.**

15. Prevention and Public Health

a. How will preventive dental care be maintained (particularly for children)? - **The Health Board continues to provide the Designed to Smile programme. Preventive care is part of the new contract.**

b. Impact assessment on oral health outcomes - **National epidemiology surveys are carried out by Public Health Wales (e.g. [Dental health for children - Public Health Wales](#), [Dental public health - Public Health Wales](#))**

16. Regulatory Duties (GDC Standards)

a. Confirm reference to General Dental Council standards

All dentists and DCP's are required to comply with the standards set by the General Dental Council (GDC), including the "Standards for the Dental Team," which set out the professional and ethical responsibilities for dental professionals.

b. How will:

- continuity of care
- patient safety
- safeguarding

be ensured when routine NHS access is unavailable?

Following the decision by GDS contractors in north Powys to hand back their contract an Invitation to Tender has been issued for the provision of General Dental Services in Newtown ([Invitation to Tender: Provision of General Dental Services in Newtown - Powys Teaching Health Board](#)) with a further Invitation to Tender due shortly for Welshpool.

17. Communication With the Public

a. When will patients be formally notified?

General Dental Service practices are required as part of their contract to contact patients of the closure and the arrangements being put in place to support continuity of care.

b. How will alternative arrangements be communicated? - **Patients seeking access to NHS dental services are advised to register via the Dental Access Portal (DAP) at <https://pthb.nhs.wales/dap>. If you do not have internet access you can call the Powys NHS Dental Access Line on 01686 252 808. Patients will be allocated from the Dental Access Portal as additional General Dental Services capacity becomes available.**

Information on how to access services is also made available via the Health Board's website and other public communications.

c. Will patients receive written confirmation of their rights? **General Dental Service practices are required as part of their contract to contact patients of the closure and the arrangements being put in place to support continuity of care.**

18. Long-Term Strategy

a. Long-term plan to restore NHS dentistry in Powys - **The Health Board has developed a longer-term approach to stabilise and restore NHS dental services across Powys through the reinvestment of funding released from contract terminations, re-procurement of NHS General Dental Services (GDS) contracts, and expansion of salaried service provision.**

This includes prioritising areas where access has been most affected, including North Powys, and strengthening overall service resilience through a combination of independent contractor and Health Board-delivered services.

An Invitation to Tender has been issued for the provision of General Dental Services in Newtown ([Invitation to Tender: Provision of General](#)

Dental Services in Newtown - Powys Teaching Health Board) with a further Invitation to Tender due shortly for Welshpool.

- a. Consideration of:
- salaried dental centres
 - mobile provision
 - mixed contract models
 - cross-border services

The health board operates salaried dental services and a mobile unit as outlined above.

b. Timeline for restoration of NHS access in Newtown and Welshpool - **An Invitation to Tender has been issued for the provision of General Dental Services in Newtown (Invitation to Tender: Provision of General Dental Services in Newtown - Powys Teaching Health Board) with a further Invitation to Tender due shortly for Welshpool.**

19. Cost and Effectiveness of Temporary / Mobile Provision

a. Total cost of mobile and temporary dental services (last 2 years) – **We are unable to provide a breakdown.**

a. Full breakdown (staffing, equipment, operational costs)

We are unable to provide a breakdown for equipment and operational costs as this information is not centrally held. Please see the list below for staffing costs.

- Staffing for 2024/25 £183k
- Staffing for 2025/26 £194k

b. Number of patients treated via:

- mobile units
- CDS

We are unable to separate Mobile Dental Unit data from CDS data.

The number of patients treated each month by our Community Dental Service is set out below. Our records do not separate patients by delivery type (e.g. mobile unit, CDS clinic).

Month	Number of appointments
April 2025	1,461
May 2025	1,487
June 2025	1,271
July 2025	1,394
August 2025	1,432
September 2025	1,417
October 2025	1,607
November 2025	1,349
December 2025	1,273
January 2026	1,404
February 2026	1,284
March 2026	1,455

c. Average patients treated per day and per year

We do not hold information about the average number of patients treated per day but the table above indicates the total number of patients treated each month by the Community Dental Service.

d. Estimated proportion of unmet demand these services cover - **Information not held.**

e. Cost per patient compared to standard NHS contracts - **Information not held.**

Final Statement

This request seeks to understand how Powys teaching Health Board is meeting its statutory duties in the context of what appears to be a systemic failure of NHS dental provision in Powys. If the information requested is not centrally held, I request disclosure of any partial datasets, internal briefings, correspondence, or reports addressing these matters.

I would prefer to receive the information electronically.

Given the scale of public concern and the potential impact on health outcomes, I would ask that this request is treated with appropriate urgency and full transparency.

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



Warren Tolley
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Associate Dental Director Powys Teaching Health Board

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.