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Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Bae Abertawe
Swansea Bay University
Health Board

Cadeirydd/Chair: **Emma Woollett**
Prif Weithredwr/Chief Executive: **Tracy Myhill**

gofalu am ein gilydd, cydweithio, gwella bob amser
caring for each other, working together, always improving

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg ac yn y Saesneg. We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

Dyddiad/Date: 7th August 2020
Ein Cyf / Our Ref: 20-G-018

• 01639 648363
 FOIA.Requests@wales.nhs.uk

Corporate Services
Headquarters
1 Talbot Gateway
Baglan
Port Talbot, SA12 7BR

Dear

I refer to your Freedom of Information Act Request acknowledged by ourselves on 16th June 2020. Your request sought information relating to COVID-19 related operation cancellations.

How many non-emergency operations have been cancelled and/or postponed in SBU between 15.3.2020 and 15.6.2020?

The Minister for Health and Social Services announced on 13th March 2020 a number of key COVID-19 related actions NHS Wales should take. These actions included guidance to suspend a range of activity to enable dedicated capacity for COVID-19 to be built up and to protect vulnerable patients.

As a result of the Minister's announcement, SBUHB took the following action:

- Non-urgent outpatient appointments were suspended with a number of exceptions mainly in the areas of paediatrics, neonatology, ophthalmology, thyroid, oncology and renal services. Urgent outpatient activity has continued albeit adapted and delivered through different modalities using digital technology.
- Non-urgent surgical admissions and procedures were suspended, and for a 2-week period to allow intensive upskilling of theatre staff in critical care, some urgent procedures were suspended. Emergency surgery continued to be prioritised daily.

During this time, a number of different approaches have been taken to minimise the impact of COVID-19 by use of digital solutions that have enabled virtual outpatient appointments and patient reviews to be undertaken remotely. It is also important to



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Swansea Bay University Health Board is the operational name of Swansea Bay University Local Health Board

note that some patients have chosen not to proceed with appointment or surgery during the pandemic period.

We are working within guidance provided by Welsh Government on the delivery of essential services. The essential services framework is based on World Health Organisation (WHO) guidance and is further complemented by a suite of guideline documents on a service- specific level and are informed by Royal College guidance and specific condition or focus groups.

There are no services categorised as essential that have been stopped in their entirety.

It is not possible to accurately provide information on the total number of postponed or cancelled procedures at this time as our recording systems for managing virtual consultations with national and local IT systems are still being developed.

We are in the process of making plans to safely reintroduce non-urgent procedures, based on clinical need.

I hope this information is helpful. If you require anything further please contact us at FOIA.Requests@wales.nhs.uk.

Under the terms of the Health Board's Freedom of Information policy, individuals seeking access to recorded information held by the Health Board are entitled to request 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 me directly at the address below or register your complaint via FOIA.Requests@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: 029 2067 8400.

Yours sincerely



Darren Griffiths
Interim Director of Finance

On behalf of

Pam Wenger
Director of Corporate Governance

